

Commonwealth snubs Palestine and Yemen

ST. ANDREWS (AFP) — Commonwealth leaders on Saturday turned down bids from Yemen, Palestine and Rwanda to join the 54-nation group but said that they would be reviewed at a later date. British officials said: "There certainly was a feeling that Yemen and Rwanda do not meet the criteria and Palestine is not in a position to make an application." However, a British government spokesman stressed that the bids would be reviewed at a later date. There was a consensus the leaders "did not want to reject any of these applications," said a Commonwealth spokesman. The Palestinian National Authority was turned down because it was not yet a full state, the officials said. Yemen did not qualify at present because the Arab country had failed to meet the "Harare principles" drawn up at the group's 1991 summit.

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Arab League leader says he will debate Lockerbie with British FM

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid said Monday he will soon meet British Foreign Minister Robin Cook in Cairo to discuss the Lockerbie affair. Mr. Cook and his French counterpart Hubert Vedrine are "expected soon" in Cairo, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said, but he did not give a date. The Arab League head said Mr. Cook had expressed a desire through diplomatic channels to meet on the fatal 1988 bombing of a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie, Scotland, which Western countries have blamed on Libya. Dr. Meguid also called for a "political solution [to the Lockerbie affair] and a loosening of sanctions" against Libya.

16 people murdered south of Algiers — reports

ALGIERS (AFP) — Sixteen people, including a seven-month old baby, were murdered by an armed group that attacked their village south of the capital Algiers, the daily Le Soir D'Algerie reported Monday. The paper said four men and a woman were also kidnapped during the attack late Friday on the village of Oued Djer. It said the casualties included 10 children, among them a seven-month-old baby whose body was mutilated. It was the first massacre since last week's widely contested municipal polls in which the pro-government National Democratic Rally (RND) won a landslide victory.

Palestinian police detain two Israelis for drug smuggling

HEBRON (AFP) — Palestinian police detained on Monday two Israelis caught trying to smuggle marijuana into the West Bank town of Hebron. Palestinian security sources said. The two Israeli men were stopped at a Palestinian checkpoint and were found to be carrying two kilograms of marijuana which they intended to sell to Palestinians, the sources said. Palestinian police held the two men on the spot, then handed them over to their Israeli counterparts in a joint security liaison committee, the sources said. It was the first reported case of Palestinians arresting Israelis in a drug-related incident. Under self-rule accords, the Palestinian National Authority is not allowed to imprison any Israeli citizens they detain in connection to crime, but must immediately transfer them to Israeli authorities.

Four explosions rip through Aden, no casualties

ADEN (AFP) — Four explosions ripped through the southern Yemen town of Aden at dawn on Monday but there were no casualties or serious damage, the interior ministry said. A number of suspects have been arrested and are being questioned over their motives, the ministry said in a statement broadcast by state radio. "The explosions were aimed at threatening Yemen's security and stability," it said. "The authorities will strike with an iron fist those who attempt to disrupt the country's security." Eleven people are due to appear in court soon in connection with a series of explosions in Aden in July.

Police detain Jewish extremists at gate to Al Aqsa Mosque

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Seven members of the Jewish extremist group Hatzefim were detained Sunday by police when they tried to enter the Al Aqsa mosque to pray, a settler group said. The Al Aqsa and Dome of the Rock mosques are the most sensitive spot in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since the 1967 Mideast war, in which Israel captured Arab east Jerusalem and its holy sites from Jordan, Muslims have prayed at the mosque while Jews worship below at the Western Wall, a remnant of the second Jewish temple destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. Jews can enter the walled compound, but are barred from praying there.

Monarch says peace-making atmosphere not encouraging as when treaty was launched

Israel is the party that practises terrorism most — Saleh

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Monday said that the peace-making atmosphere between Arabs and Israel was not as encouraging as it was three years ago when Jordan signed its historic peace treaty with Israel. The King, who was speaking at a joint press conference with the visiting Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, called upon all concerned parties to work hard to achieve a "just and comprehensive peace" in the region. "I can say that the beginning stages [of the peace process] were very encouraging and full of hope that this treaty will be part of a wide effort where the Palestinian people will get their rights on their national soil, and the peace process will be comprehensive," he said. But "I believe that there is a large group in Israel that is still committed to reach peace and I think it is our duty to distinguish, as we could, between the posi-



His Majesty King Hussein receives visiting Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh on Monday (photo by Yousef Allan)

tions of [Israelis]," said the King, who was responding to a question on his personal evaluation of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty after three years since the 1993 Oct. 26 landmark accord. "I cannot say that the atmosphere is the same one that had prevailed three years ago," said the King who was referring to the stalled peace talks between the Arabs and Israel and the strain in relations with

(Continued on page 7)

Primakov in Amman on fourth leg of Russia's peace process revival tour

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov arrived here late Monday on his fourth leg of a Middle East tour in a new Russian endeavour to overcome the deadlock in peace making between the Arabs and Israel.

Mr. Primakov, who arrived here from Damascus, will hold talks with His Majesty King Hussein and brief him on the outcome of his tour that took him to Lebanon, Israel, the Palestinian self-rule areas and Syria. The Russian minister is expected to brief the King on Russia's proposals to bring the talks between

Syria and Israel back to the negotiating table. During the two-day visit, Mr. Primakov will meet with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and other senior officials. Before his arrival to Jordan.

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Israel frees 26 Palestinians as part of deal with Jordan

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel freed a new group of 26 Palestinian prisoners Monday as part of a pay-off to Jordan for the release of Israeli agents caught trying to murder an Islamist leader in Amman, officials said.

All 26 Palestinians released on Monday were members of the Fateh faction or the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a rival group based in Damascus which is opposed to peace accords with Israel, Israeli and Palestinian sources said. None of those freed were accused of killing or seriously wounding Israelis and most were serving relatively

light sentences for throwing stones, firebombs or pipebombs during confrontations with Israeli troops, officials said. Prison officials however said one man had been sentenced to 10 years for belonging to "an unknown terrorist organisation" and a second man had been sentenced to six years.

(Continued on page 7)

Russian FM makes surprise return to Syria with message from Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov headed from Israel to Syria Monday bearing a message from the Israeli government concerning efforts to revive bilateral peace talks, a senior Israeli official said. Mr. Primakov, who arrived in Israel Sunday following a first round of talks in Damascus with President Hafez Al Assad, had been scheduled to continue on to Jordan but changed his itinerary after talks with Israeli leaders.

"Primakov is returning to Damascus with a message from Israel," said a senior Foreign Ministry official who spoke on condition of anonymity. He refused to provide details of the Israeli message, saying only that more would be known "in the coming hours." During his first stop in Damascus, Mr. Primakov held nearly three hours of

talks with Mr. Assad, and while in Israel the Russian diplomat met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister David Levy. Mr. Primakov, speaking to reporters before leaving Damascus for Jerusalem, said "the purpose of my visit is to bring closer together the viewpoints of the two parties." A senior member of the

(Continued on page 7)

Facing political storm, Netanyahu retains hardline toward Arabs

TEL AVIV (AP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed Monday to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state and hold onto the Golan Heights, prompting the opposition leader to charge he was dragging Israel into a "unnecessary war" with the Arabs. Mr. Netanyahu's speech launching the Knesset's winter session came amid growing political uncertainty in Israel. His governing coalition could fall over the crisis with the Palestinians, the budget and religious

legislation that is alienating American Jews. Monday's session reflected the discord seething in Israel since Mr. Netanyahu won a cliffhanger election last year, ending a period of peacemaking and economic expansion. Mr. Netanyahu was continuously heckled by opposition members, some of whom held up signs declaring "I'm a proud Jew" — a reference to Mr. Netanyahu's assertion to a rabbi last week that the opposition has "forgotten what it is to be Jewish."

Ushers quickly approached them and took the signs away. The prime minister insisted he was dedicated to achieving peace, but said Israel must negotiate with its own needs in mind. "Israel will be opposed to the creation of an Arab state west of the Jordan River," he said, referring to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Mr. Netanyahu added that he would keep building Jewish settlements and make no concessions to the

(Continued on page 7)

Oldest electoral district in Jordan boasts diverse socio-political reality

By Fairouz Abu-Ghazaleh
Special to the Jordan Times

SALT — More than any other governorate, Balqa boasts a demographic, social, economic and political diversity that is leaving a clear mark on the election campaign a week before the polls. This electoral district, the oldest in Jordan, groups farmers from the Jordan Valley, the urban yet tribal coherent community of Salt and the refugees of Baqa'a. The 47 candidates, contesting the six Muslim and two Christian parliamentary seats, are trying to appeal to 180,649 registered voters with visions and concerns that are as diversified as the demographic and socio-economic composition of the governorate. No generalisations can thus be made about the general atmosphere in the governorate because each of its three major regions, Salt, Jordan Valley and Baqa'a, has its own peculiarities. The only possible generalisation, however, is similarly to other precincts, where the election campaign is less vibrant than in 1993 due to the absence of the Islamists, the weakness of political parties and the weight tribalism carries as the determining factor in swaying voters' support. Senator and prominent Salt leader Marwan Hmoud told the Jordan Times that "in Salt, people are mainly concerned about education, securing university seats and unemployment."

In the Jordan Valley, however, people are preoccupied with agricultural matters and lack of housing. In Baqa'a, meanwhile, they are concerned about problems related to housing and the infrastructure, in addition to their social and political worries," Mr. Hmoud added. Baqa'a, a region with 26,943 registered voters, and its surrounding areas are fielding five candidates in this year's electoral race: Hilmi Milhem, Jihad Abu Ajmeiah, Mohammad Ra'fat Saleh, Yaqoub Bani Hthail and Nabil Harsh, according to Ziad Abu Ghaneim, an Islamist who led the Islamic Action Front campaign in 1993 but has since resigned from the party. In the streets of the largest refugee camp in the country, people say it is obvious that one candidate, Mr. Ra'fat (whom they refer to as Sheikh Mohammad Ra'fat), is a winner. "Our society is a predominantly Islamist society, and people here will give their votes to a contestant who represents Islam and the Palestinian cause," a doctor who works in the camp said. He said he believes Mr. Ra'fat, who has been a religious education teacher for over 30 years, has the biggest chance of winning because he is "honest and efficient" and because he enjoys ample popularity

inside and outside the camp. A short trip from Baqa'a to Salt takes a person to a completely different sight, where voters are seeking different promises and where candidates are raising different banners. In this important city and its suburbs, where many have lost faith in the effectiveness of the Parliament, a total of 49,764 registered voters will elect either their tribal candidate or an educated contestant who will work for the advancement of the country and its people, observers say. "There is a deep sense of a general loss of confidence. People have lost their faith in promised economic, social and political reforms through the efforts of Parliament," Mohammad Kloub, a Salt resident, said. He said he would personally vote for a deputy who will defend democracy, and "who will serve the nation

(Continued on page 7)

Armouti, veteran media practitioner and diplomat, takes over communication aspects of 1997 elections

ment reached him. But he intends to make the best of his brief mandate, which became effective as of yesterday and will last until Nov. 11. "We will approach all issues pertaining to the elections, including alleged fraud and questionable procedures in compiling voting lists, with no inhibitions," Dr. Armouti said yesterday. His mandate comes amid not only increasing allegations of irregularities in pre-election procedures, as well as concrete evidence recently collected by the police of widespread circulation of forged voting

cards in some of the Kingdom's 21 electoral districts, but also amid increasing dissatisfaction with the way local and foreign media were answered over these issues. "I believe that my appointment was based on the assumption that there should be a professional way of processing and disseminating information and a professional way of responding to questions," Dr. Armouti told reporters during a visit to the Jordan Times Monday. With the Nov. 4 elections approaching, the government "opted for a unified

source to disseminate information and handle the media, to deal and relate with them in a network style, for synchronisation, and to utilise the available information and channel it in a positive manner," he said. "We will update the local, Arab, and foreign media on all matters pertaining to the elections, and we will inform them of the latest developments with transparency and hopefully credibility and honesty," pledged Dr. Armouti, who headed the Institute of Diplomacy and served as an advisor to HRH Crown



Mazen Armouti
Prince Hassan. He described his appointment as falling "within the

(Continued on page 7)

Israeli gunman released 8 years early, flies to U.S.

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel on Sunday released a U.S.-born man serving a life sentence for killing two Palestinians and escorted him to the airport, where he was to leave for the U.S. Alan Goodman, a 53-year-old Israeli who holds U.S. citizenship, was freed after agreeing to spend the next eight years in the United States. In an interview with the Yediot Ahronot newspaper this week, he was quoted as saying he did not regret the killings but hoped "to live the rest of my life in quiet and peace... I'm very happy to be leaving here."

On April 11, 1982, Goodman opened fire on Palestinians praying at Al Aqsa Mosque. Goodman, who claimed he was trying to return the walled enclave to the Jewish people, killed two Palestinians and wounded nine. A prison review board decided on Oct. 14 to commute Goodman's sentence on the condition he return to the U.S. Goodman will not be allowed to vacation in Israel during those eight years. Life terms in Israel generally are shortened to

(Continued on page 7)

Israeli officers calling for free hand in Lebanon, report says

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli army commanders are demanding a free hand against Shiite Hizbollah guerrillas in south Lebanon and want to abandon U.S.-brokered understandings that kept both sides from targeting civilians, a newspaper reported Monday.

The report was denied by Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

The understandings were reached in April 1996, following Operation Grapes of Wrath, a two-week Israeli air and artillery attack on Lebanon launched after Hizbollah shelled settlements in northern Israel.

Under the accord, Israel agreed not to shell Lebanese villages and Hizbollah said it would not

attack northern Israel. Hizbollah also agreed not to launch attacks from populated areas.

In recent months, Israeli casualties have been increasing, with more than 35 Israeli soldiers killed in fighting in south Lebanon this year. A botched September raid by an Israeli elite commando cost 12 Israeli lives, and Israel's heavy battle tank, the Merkava, has been penetrated several times by Hizbollah missiles.

The Yediot Achronot daily said Monday that senior army officers told Mordechai the "Grapes of Wrath" understandings should be abandoned. The officer, Yediot said, complained that Hizbollah was systematically violating the deal by firing mortars

and anti-tank missiles from Lebanese villages, with Israel then unable to retaliate because of the ban on targeting civilians.

Earlier this month, the army showed journalists a video clip of a few houses with puffs of smoke emerging from them. The army said the smoke was from a weapon being fired by Hizbollah from inside the residential area.

Mr. Mordechai said he met Sunday with the armed forces chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Amnon Shahak, and the top Israeli commander for southern Lebanon, Maj. Gen. Amir Levine.

"I didn't hear from anyone yesterday a desire to forfeit the Grapes of Wrath agreement," Mr. Mordechai told reporters.

"We plan to fulfil the Grapes of Wrath agreement and we demand from all who signed it to fulfil it completely."

The government's chief policy adviser on Lebanon, Uri Lührani, said the advantages derived from the understandings still outweigh the disadvantages because they help protect civilians.

"We have an interest in sticking to these understandings because we don't have a better solution," Mr. Lührani said.

In the past, when Israel shelled Lebanese villages, Hizbollah would routinely fire rockets at northern Israel. Such attacks forced civilians in northern Israel to enter bomb shelters, paralysed the local economy and scared off tourists.



MANOEUVRES IN EGYPT: An advance team from the 24th Marine Expeditionary unit deploy after an amphibious operation on the Egyptian northern coast on Monday. Seven countries, including the U.S., Egypt, France, Italy, Britain, the UAE and Kuwait are participating in the joint military manoeuvres known as Bright Star 97 (Reuters photo)

Israeli association head calls on Egypt to attend Doha economic meeting

CAIRO (AFP) — The head of the Israeli Industrial Association called in a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Monday for Egyptian business executives to attend next month's regional economic conference in Doha.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with Mr. Mubarak in Cairo, Dan Proper said that he "mentioned the Doha conference" to the Egyptian leader.

He added: "I wish for the conference to succeed, and I hope to meet my Egyptian colleagues there."

Mr. Mubarak on Sunday linked Egypt's participation in the conference, which includes Israel, to Israel's freezing construction of new Jewish housing on the West Bank.

Several Arab states are boycotting the Nov. 16-18 Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference in Qatar, calling for Israel first to take new steps to break deadlocks in the Middle East peace process.

Mr. Proper said he hoped for economic cooperation between Arabs and Israelis despite obstacles to the peace process.

"We (businessmen) must work for peace without waiting for the politicians... I am sure that businessmen can work wonders," he said.

Mr. Mubarak received the Israeli industrial leader after meeting with Israeli President Ezer Weizman last month on private sector cooperation, the Israeli embassy here said.

Palestinian police arrest journalist for torture expose — report

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Palestinian Authority has arrested a journalist after he published an article on the torture of Hamas militants arrested by Palestinian security forces, a human rights group said on Monday.

Khaled Al Amayreh was arrested on Sunday by Palestinian security services, a statement by the

Jerusalem-based Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group (PHRMG) said.

Amayreh, 41, had written an article in the Sunday edition of an Arab-Israeli newspaper Saut Al Haq Wa'l Hureya in which he reported on the torture of members of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) by Palestinian security.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, under pressure from Israel, has launched a crackdown on Hamas, arresting around 80 Hamas members since a pair of suicide bombings by the group in Jerusalem in July and September.

Amayreh's article included quotes from prisoners taken from prison interviews, the PHRMG said.

"I was tortured so severely that I called out for God to have mercy on me. The interrogator said, 'If God comes, we will arrest him as well,'" one prisoner, Wael Asaad, said in the article, quoted by the statement.

Another prisoner told how he was stripped and lay on the floor. Guards then poured cold water on

him and beat him with a broomstick until it broke. "Then they brought another one," the prisoner said.

Amayreh, a member of the PHRMG, telephoned the group's director Bassem Eid before the publication of the article and said he feared he would be arrested over the expose, the statement said.

The PHRMG called for a

letter campaign to Mr. Arafat and his attorney general calling for Amayreh's release.

Human rights organisations have accused Arafat's security forces of widespread use of torture and of limiting freedom of speech by arresting and intimidating journalists critical of its policies.

Turkish captain abducting Egyptians anchors off Istanbul

ANKARA (AFP) — A Turkish ship which last week fled the Suez Canal into international waters, carrying off Egyptian port officials, rather than pay thousands of dollars in overdue canal fees, anchored off Istanbul Monday, the Anatolian news agency said.

Istanbul port authorities and Egypt's consul general here met to decide on what to do next after the ship's arrival, Anatolian said.

The cargo ship, the Obo Engin, en route from Singapore, sped out of the canal toward Turkey Thursday after eight Egyptian officials boarded the boat to

collect some \$375,000 the owners owed for previous use of the canal.

A port authority motorboat chased the Obo Engin through the Mediterranean during the night but was unable to catch the ship, which is carrying 44,000 tonnes of coal.

Obo Engin then passed through the Mediterranean, the Aegean Sea and Turkey's Dardanelles Strait with no intervention.

Cairo has contacted Ankara "in an effort first of all to guarantee the safety of the abducted Egyptian nationals," Egyptian police said at the weekend.

Sudan peace talks delayed until Wednesday

NAIROBI (R) — Peace talks between the Sudanese government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) have been postponed until Wednesday, the Kenyan Foreign Ministry announced.

The talks had been scheduled to begin on Monday, but the host, Kenyan Foreign Minister Kalonzo Musyoka, will only return home later in the week. He has been

attending the Commonwealth summit in Scotland.

"We can confirm that the meeting has been delayed until Oct. 29, because the minister of foreign affairs will be arriving on that particular day in the morning," a foreign ministry official said.

The talks on ending Africa's longest-running civil war are being organised by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a

grouping of seven states mainly from the Horn of Africa and chaired by Kenya.

Delegations from Ethiopia and Eritrea would also arrive on Wednesday, the official said.

Sudan's National Islamic Front government agreed in September to attend the talks, in what diplomats and analysts said was a sign of military weakness and diplomatic isolation.

The Khartoum government had pulled out of negotiations over the issue of self-determination for the south.

Commander Nihal Deng, spokesman for the SPLM, which is the political wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), said: "Wednesday will just be an opening ceremony and then the substantive talks will start the day after."

Participants in the talks would decide on the issues

up for discussion, the foreign ministry official said.

"The agenda will have to come from the protagonists themselves. We don't want to announce the agenda for the talks because we're just the hosts."

The discussions are the latest in a series of international attempts to end Sudan's civil war, in which an estimated 1.3 million people have died through violence and famine since 1983.

Aideed seeking Egyptian support

CAIRO (AP) — Hussein Aideed, leader of one of Somalia's two main warring factions, arrived in Cairo Monday to seek Egyptian support for a Somali National Unity Conference next month.

Egypt has tried to reconcile warring Somali factions since the country disintegrated into fiefdoms after the 1991 ouster of dictator Mohammed Said Barre. Mr. Aideed, leader of the most powerful Somali faction, is scheduled to meet with Foreign Minister Amr Musa for talks on the reconciliation conference that will bring Mr. Aideed and rival faction leader Ali Mahdi Mohammed together for peace talks in the Somali town of Bosaso, on the Gulf of Aden.

The conference is being organised by the National Salvation Council, formed in January by 26 faction leaders. Both Mr. Aideed and Mr. Mohammed may meet in Cairo in coming days, Egypt's Middle East News Agency said Monday.

Israel seeks to boost agricultural sales to Turkey

ANKARA (AFP) — Israel is seeking to boost its involvement in Turkey's ambitious agricultural development programmes along with the two countries' newly-launched close defence ties, an Israeli diplomat said Monday.

"Israel's sales of agricultural equipment to Turkey are already worth tens of millions of dollars, and we want to boost cooperation in this field particularly with the development of Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia (GAP) programme," said Nissan Amdor, second-

secretary at the Israeli embassy here.

"We are especially good in drip irrigation, dairy products, greenhouse production and seeds, and we want to share our experience with Turkey," Mr. Amdor told AFP.

Turkey launched its \$30-billion and 40-year GAP project in the early 1970s to open its arid but potentially productive lands in its southeast to agriculture.

The area of planned irrigation is bigger than the three Benelux countries, and Turkey has undertaken

a giant construction project, building 22 dams to make use of the waters of Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Ankara is continuing with the project despite protests by its southern neighbours Syria and Iraq, which are dependent on the rivers for their water supplies.

"Apart from regional programmes with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians on agriculture, we are also involved in good cooperation with countries like Russia, China, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and we want to do the same with Turkey,"

Mr. Amdor said. He said during Turkish Agriculture Minister Mustafa Tasar's planned visit to Israel in early December, the two countries were expected to sign landmark cooperation agreements.

Turkey and Israel, whose two-way trade totalled nearly \$460 million last year, seek to more than triple the figure by 2000 with the help of a recently-signed free trade agreement.

"Israel's partnership with Turkey should not be seen as a merely military one, we

want to develop our ties in all fields," Mr. Amdor said.

Following decades of dormant relations, Ankara and the Jewish state boosted their ties to a strategic level last year with the signing of two comprehensive accords on military and defence industry cooperation.

The two countries are also planning joint naval manoeuvres with the participation of the United States in the eastern Mediterranean in the next few months despite protests by several Arab states and Iran.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:10Sandokan
14:30C.R.O.
15:00Skiy
16:00The Album Show
16:30Square One T.V.
17:00French Programmes
19:00News in French
19:30News Headlines
19:35Sarah
20:00Coach
20:30Encounter
21:10 Hollywood Remembers
22:00News in English
22:30Great Defender
23:15I Remember Nelson
23:59End of T.V.

PRAYER TIMES

04:26Fajr
05:44(Sunrise) Doha
11:19Dhuhr
14:26'Asr
16:55Maghreb
18:12Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church

Tel. 661757.

Terra Sancta Church

Tel. 622366.

Anglican Church

Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church

Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church

Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church

Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church

Tel. 5516245.

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 845457.

The Latter-Day Saints

Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazareth

Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church

in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Temperatures are expected to drop slightly with skies partly-

cloudy. There will be a chance of scattered showers and winds northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, skies will be partly cloudy, winds northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman15/25

Aqaba19/32

Deserts14/28

Jordan Valley18/31

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 27, Aqaba 34 Humidity readings: Amman 34 per cent, Aqaba 23 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Bassam Karadsheh759200

Dr. Ramzi Mazzawi894788

Dr. Salwan Daboubi776751

Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846070

Ferdows pharmacy778336

Al Asena pharmacy637055

Al Salam pharmacy636730

Yacoub pharmacy644945

Shmeisani pharmacy637660

Nairoukh pharmacy623672

Najib pharmacy847632

IRBID:

Dr. Fawzi Abel Hajja252970

Al Quds pharmacy(—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Samir Abdul Lawzi989601

Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre637111

Civil Defence Dept661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue630341

Civil Defence Emergency199

Rescue Police 192. 621111. 637777

Fire Brigade617101

Blood Bank775121

Highway Police843402

Traffic Police896390

Public Security Department630321

Hotel Complaints605800

Price Complaints661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints897467

Amman Municipality Complaints787111

Telephone Information (direct assistance)121

Overseas Calls010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs661101

Jordan Television773111

Radio Jordan774111

Water Authority680100

Jordan Electricity Authority815615

Electric Power Company636381

RJ Flight Information0853200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussain Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity644281/6

Akileh Maternity642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity642362

Malhas, J. Amman636140

Palestine, Shmeisani607071

Shmeisani Hospital669131

University Hospital845845

Al-Munasher Hospital 66727/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:15Aqaba (add) (RJ)

07:15Sanaa (RJ)

07:25Damascus (RJ)

09:25Abu Dhabi (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

05:00Aqaba (add) (RJ)

05:00Aqaba (add) (RJ)

05:00Aqaba (add) (RJ)

05:00Aqaba (add) (RJ)

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PRINCESS HAYA VISITS YOUTH MINISTRY: Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Monday visits the Ministry of Youth and Culture, where she discusses ways of developing the youth movement and improving legislation to serve athletes with Minister of Youth and Culture Qassem Abu Ein (Petra photo)



Environmental study to precede construction of Amman ring road

AMMAN (Petra) — The expected population growth requires that the concerned authorities find an appropriate solution to the increasing pressure on roads and the environment. Minister of Public Works and Housing Nasser Lawzi said Monday.

At the opening session of the "Workshop on Environmental Assessment," which is part of a feasibility study on a projected ring road around Amman, Mr. Lawzi pointed out that despite the size of the land area in Jordan, 80 per cent of the population lives in cities, with two million in the capital.

The participants in the meeting will conduct an assessment of the environmental impact and advantages and disadvantages of

the ring road, which is to be funded by the World Bank, he said.

A series of open meetings will be held at the locations around Amman that will be affected by the construction of this road, he said.

The road will circumvent the Fuheis and Zarqa regions, he added.

The successive governments have invested nearly \$3 billion over the past two decades in building a network of roads, something which in turn has contributed to raising the gross domestic product in the Kingdom, according to Mr. Lawzi.

The government has created a special fund to finance the maintenance of roads and has formed a council to advise the Ministry of Public

Works on collecting tolls, he said.

Abdul Majid Kabariti, assistant secretary general of the ministry, said the road project, which will be carried out in several stages, is intended to contribute to improving the economy.

The ring road will reduce traffic congestion on Amman roads and divert traffic away from areas surrounding the capital, including Sahab, Fuheis, Salt, and Wadi Seer.

The feasibility study, he said, will be part of the nation's transport strategy, adding that the World Bank has asked that an environmental study precede the implementation of the project.

Press freedoms seminar opens today

AMMAN (J.T.) — A seminar on the development of Jordan's media and press freedoms in the country will open today, a joint effort between two local research centres and an international press freedoms group.

"Media and Press Freedoms in Jordan" is being hosted by the Arab Media Institute, an NGO concerned with the study of the media and issues facing media practitioners in the Arab World, and Al Urdan Al Jadid, a political research centre, in cooperation with Article 19, a London-based press freedoms organisation that has recently published a comprehensive report on Jordan's press.

The three organisations have invited approximately 20 personalities from newspapers, former governments and parliaments, and the legal profession in the country to speak.

Participants will discuss the performance of the press since the beginning of the country's democratic process (Al Doustour Chief Editor Mahmoud Sharrif), new amendments to the 1993 Press and Publications Law (Lawyer Asma Khader) and the ensuing consequences for weekly, daily, and political parties' newspapers papers (Al Arab Al Yawm Chief Editor Taher Adwan and writers Nidal Mansour and Mahmoud Rimawi), international law and jurisprudence on press freedom (Toby Mendel, head of the law programme at Article 19), and relationships between the government, parliament, judiciary, and the press in Jordan (former Prime Minister Taher Masri, former deputy Fares Nabulsi and former Supreme Court Judge Fahd Abu Uthman).

A former Amman-based correspondent for German radio will also discuss the international community's perception of media development in Jordan.

Minister issues call for 'peace culture' at UNESCO conference

PARIS (Petra) — Jordan has called on the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and its member nations to develop a "peace culture" and promote it worldwide.

Presenting Jordan's address to UNESCO's 29th Conference, being held in Paris, Minister of Education Munther Masri said UNESCO has to undertake this responsibility to uphold its principles and fulfil mankind's desire

to live in peace.

Dr. Masri spoke on the situation in the occupied Arab territories, where he said the Palestinians' human rights are being violated.

The Palestinians continue to suffer in the absence of a just and comprehensive peace that can guarantee their rights, including the right to establish an independent state on Palestinian soil, he said.

Among the major issues that require UNESCO's immediate attention at the

international level are the "peace culture and human rights, as well as independent and free media," according to Dr. Masri.

UNESCO's principles call for developing peaceful relations among nations and spreading democracy, basic freedoms, equality, and social justice, he said.

Human rights are being violated in areas of conflict, said the minister, who urged UNESCO to work in conjunction with other global organisations

to ensure the establishment of world peace.

Dr. Masri commended UNESCO's endeavours in spreading education and culture, particularly its plans to ensure education for all.

Speaking on the education situation in Jordan, he said one-third of the population now receives education at several levels, adding that basic and compulsory education is in force for students until the age of 16.

Prime minister urges Customs Department to improve performance

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday urged the Customs Department to speed up the settlement of customs-related questions, saying that outstanding customs problems impede trade and harm the economy.

During a visit to the department, Dr. Majali said complicated customs issues should be referred to courts or arbitration to reach a settlement as soon as possible.

The prime minister also called on the Customs Department to open a channel of communication with Jordanian embassies so that expatriates and investors can be informed of the incentives, facilities, and services that are offered by the government in customs and investment-related matters.

Since the department is in constant contact with the public, importers, and visitors at land, air, and sea ports, its cadres

shoulder a great responsibility for facilitating customs work, according to the prime minister.

The department and its affiliated offices should cut down on routine and formalities as much as possible, and their officers should be open to the public's complaints, he said.

Dr. Majali underlined the need for the Customs Department to maintain close contacts with the media to orient the public in general, and investors,

expatriates, and visitors in particular on the country's regulations and facilities.

Customs Department Director General Nazmi Abdullah briefed the prime minister on the department's duties and facilities offered to promote investment.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour and Minister of Finance Suleiman Hafez.

Civil aviation agreements signed with Mauritania, Kazakhstan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The civil aviation authorities of Jordan and Mauritania recently signed an agreement to regulate flights by the national airlines to the two capitals.

The agreement, which was signed by Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Director General Jasser Ziyad and his Mauritanian counterpart Amrik Ould Qirfeh, grants the two sides the right to operate flights between Amman and Nouakchott in accordance with the market's requirements.

With the conclusion of this agreement, Jordan has secured deals on civil avi-

ation with all the Arab countries in North Africa, according to Mr. Ziyad, who added that Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national air carrier, is currently studying the Mauritanian market to determine if it is feasible to operate regular flights to Mauritania.

RJ currently operates regular flights to Tunisia and Morocco, and the Algerian airline operates a direct flight between Amman and Algiers, he said.

The Mauritanian delegation visited CAA's various facilities and training centres and studied prospects for training Mauritanian

cadres in Jordan, especially in air navigation, telecommunications engineering, and airport electric power services.

The delegation also visited the Royal Air Academy and inspected the training programmes for pilots.

Meanwhile, RJ and the Kazakhstan Airlines Sunday concluded an agreement providing for the training in Jordan of Kazakhstani pilots on Airbus-320 planes.

Hassan Matar, director of training at RJ, said six of the Kazakhstani pilots have already been training for 35 days.

The training centre will

shortly conclude an agreement for the training of a number of Italian cadres on Airbus planes, he added.

In July 1966, the Arab Air Carriers Organisation signed an agreement to establish a regional civil aviation training centre in Amman for the employees of 18 Arab airlines, including RJ.

The training centre, which was financed by the European Union at the cost of \$750,000, covers several domains, including administration, financing, ticketing, and ground service training.

Narcotics department arrests two for smuggling

AMMAN (Petra) — Two men, one Jordanian and one Turkish, were arrested Monday for their involvement in a drug trafficking operation, according to an announcement by the Anti-Narcotics Department (AND).

AND Director Colonel Nazih Shreideh said the two suspects, identified as Yousef Qamar and Nihad Ogul, were apprehended while Mr. Qamar, allegedly one of the main drug operators in Jordan, was delivering six kilograms of opium to Mr.

Ogul.

Referring to a department announcement Sunday that four people, including a Lebanese national, were arrested for involvement in smuggling five kilograms of heroin, Col. Shreideh said new evidence and information on the case have been gathered.

He said press statements published Monday by Khalil Haddadin, whose son was reported to be one of the suspects arrested in the case, were groundless.

According to Col. Shreideh, Mr. Haddadin's statement that his son's arrest was part of a conspiracy to tarnish his reputation are baseless, adding that if a conspiracy did exist, it came from Mr. Haddadin's son.

Mr. Haddadin, a candidate in the upcoming elections, had said the arrest of his son was a "timed trap," adding that he was sure of his son's innocence.

Col. Shreideh said the suspect agreed with a Jordanian drug dealer to bring heroin from Lebanon.

He said the suspect went

to Lebanon in September, together with an accomplice, and there they met a Lebanese drug dealer who promised to sell them the heroin.

According to Col. Shreideh, Mr. Haddadin's son returned to Jordan, leaving his accomplice behind to complete the transaction.

The suspects were apprehended while they were unloading the heroin at a farm in South Shuneh in the Jordan Valley, where the suspect was receiving the drugs, he said.

Exchange programme analyses roles of women in society

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As part of the Jordan-Japan women's exchange programme to promote friendship and mutual understanding, five Japanese women representing medical, educational, and women's non-governmental organisations (NGOs) met with their counterparts in Jordan last week.

During their four-day stay, the roles of both Jordanian and Japanese women in society were debated at the General Federation of Jordanian Women by representatives from both countries.

The Japanese delegation, which consisted of Masako Hiramatsu, Kazuko Demura, Taeko Imoto, Sachiko Okumura, and Nobuko Kurosaki, spoke about Japanese women in the labour force, women's roles in aging society, social participation, the Japanese government's Plan of Action,

and women's NGOs.

Women's issues in Japan include the participation of women in the decision-making process, violence against women, peace, the environment, and development, Sachiko Okumura, Chair of the NGO committee for the Pan-Pacific and Southeast Asia Women's Association of Japan, told women at the federation.

She admitted that women's participation in political life in Japan was quite low, since the single-seat constituency election system had changed, making it difficult for women to win a seat in parliament.

Former senator Leila Sharaf spoke of women in the decision-making process in Jordan, stating that "the present system is a serious hindrance," and would have to be modified if women were to be represented in Parliament.

Society, she said, accepts women when they are appointed to decision-making

positions. In this instance, women have credibility, and society deals with them as they would with men and sometimes with even more respect, Ms. Sharaf said.

Ms. Sharaf added that Jordan's leadership has been very effective in promoting the role of women, which contrasts with society's attitude toward women politicians.

Having one woman in Parliament is merely symbolic, she said, and does not mean that women have attained rights and established themselves.

"If women are absent from the political scene, then their rights will be abused, neglected, or even taken for granted, as is the case now," she added.

As for the situation of Japanese women in the labour force, President of the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPW) of Japan Masako Hiramatsu said 40.5 per cent of the total labour force in Japan were

women, but their average income was only 60 percent of men's wages.

"According to the employment law, there should be equal employment opportunities for both men and women with no discrimination," but in reality, women find it very difficult to find jobs, as employers prefer to hire male employees, Mrs. Okumura said.

On the role of women in an aging society, the Japanese delegation said women have the sole responsibility of being caretakers for the aged, further adding to their responsibility of housework, childcare, and work.

According to Taeko Imoto, a nurse at the Hiroshima City Health Promotion Centre, women in Japan were confronted with the dilemma of choosing between marriage and a career.

"Keeping up with a job is almost impossible, and the vast majority of women are eventually forced to quit," she said.

Mrs. Okumura said she believed that powerful women's organisations are more important than women gaining access to parliament, since these groups can lobby for women's issues.

Senator Sharaf maintained that the women's movement in the Kingdom has so far not been able to assert itself as a strong lobby for the support of elected women.

The Japanese delegation also touched upon the theme of violence against women as a major issue in the global arena. Mrs. Okumura stated that in order to fight violence against women, the Japanese government had set up a fund within UNIFEM with a \$1.5 million budget.

Mrs. Okumura concluded by saying that this type of exchange between Jordanian and Japanese women was a means of finding solutions to common problems.

NEWS IN BRIEF

One killed, three injured after being struck by car in Salt

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 12-year-old boy was killed Monday and his three brothers were injured after being struck by a vehicle in Salt, according to official sources.

The four children were standing on the street in the Saleem suburb when they were struck by a speeding vehicle driven by a man identified only by his initials, A.Y.J.

The deceased was identified as Mohammad Alfi. His

brothers, Rami, 15, Hamzeh, 13, and Islam, nine, were rushed to Hussein Hospital and were listed in fair condition.

Ministry urges citizens to refrain from gunfire

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Monday urged citizens to refrain from discharging firearms at ceremonies. The ministry noted that official statistics indicated that shootings last

year killed six people and injured 421.

RJ honours travel agents

AMMAN (Petra) — Royal Jordanian (RJ) Monday honoured a group of travel and tour agents. RJ's Commercial Affairs Deputy Director General Majdi Sabri said the Middle East is currently witnessing a decrease in the number of tourists, and tour leaders and travel agents play a pivotal role in attracting tourists to the region.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Faulty Towers" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

CHOIR

* Choir performance by the students of the Ahliah School for Girls at the Royal Cultural Centre, the main theatre, at 6:00 p.m.

DIALOGUE

* Open dialogue with May Rishani about her experience at Lebanon's Sabika workshop at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh at 6:00 p.m.

JEWELRY/DESIGN SHOW

* Jewelry show from Lebanon's "Sabika" workshop and show of designs by Lebanese artist May Rishani at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 643251/2), until Oct. 30.

EXHIBITIONS

* Graphics exhibition by Abdul Wahab Abdul Mohsen at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Nov. 5.

at the Royal Cultural Centre, also displaying paintings by Dutch artist Jamal Khmais, until Oct. 30.

* Ceramics exhibition at the Silsil Ceramics workshop, Jabal Amman between 4th and 5th Circles, until Oct. 30 (Tel. 680128).

* Works by Bahrami artist Sheikh Rashid Al Khalifa at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Nov. 15. Also displaying a new collection of works by contemporary Arab artists (Tel. 643251/2).

* Ceramics exhibition by Ra'd Dlaini at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Uthman, until Oct. 30.

* Paintings by Iraqi artist Walid Nasrallah at Hammourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street, until Oct. 28.

* Paintings by Abdul Qader Bakheet at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Oct. 30.

* Exhibition of paintings and weaving entitled "Murmurs of Our Land" by Riham Ghassib and Bari Hamida at Bari Hamida House (Tel. 658896/7), until Oct. 30.

* Exhibition of Catalan masters of the 20th century entitled "Aurea Mediterranea" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until Oct. 28 (except Tuesdays).

Oslo conference takes new look at child labour debate

OSLO (AFP) — The Conference on Child Labour which opened here Monday will have as its centrepiece an "Agenda for Action" aimed at channelling future international efforts to counter a growing trend.

The agenda is to be considered Thursday, the final day of a conference which has attracted government ministers from 40 industrialised and developing countries as well as trade union and employer organisations, non-governmental groupings, U.N. agencies and leading experts on child labour.

A draft copy of the document says that the main goal of international efforts should remain the total elimination of child labour. But in a nod to those who favour a more gradualist approach to the problem, the agenda says that "priority should be given to the immediate removal of children from the most intolerable forms of child labour."

"Education, particularly primary education, is the principal means of preventing and eliminating child labour," the draft agenda says.

"All children outside the school system are child workers or potential child workers and the flow of children into work can only be stemmed by establishing a system of accessible, relevant good quality universal, compulsory education free for all," it says.

The draft agenda also stresses the inter-connection between child labour and poverty with the former being both a consequence and a cause of the latter.

It recalls the controversial 20/20 initiative which urges developed and developing countries to commit on average 20 per cent of both national budget and official development assistance to basic social programmes including basic education and primary health care.

The initiative, rejected in the past as being too rigid an approach, "is directly relevant to the fight against child labour," the agenda says.

The draft also highlights

the need for countries to ensure better data collection for children starting with birth and death registration and wide-ranging rehabilitation programmes for children withdrawn from work.

The document says that international cooperation is also needed to support national action plans.

In particular, it calls for participation in the preparation of a new International Labour Organisation (ILO) convention on the elimination of the most intolerable forms of child labour.

The four-day conference is tasked with forging a new, global strategy to stamp out child labour, particularly in its most virulent and life-threatening forms.

It comes amid mounting concern for some 250 million youngsters in the developing world who often work in exploitative and hazardous conditions and face injury, illness and even death.

The vast majority of these cases are in Asia, accounting for 61 per cent of the world total, with 32 per cent in Africa and seven per cent in Latin America.

"There is no single approach to child labour which is the appropriate one," said Norway's Development and Human Rights Minister Hilde Johnson in a stark message during her conference opening address.

Her comments reflected a certain disarray among the main players in the child labour debate — governments, international organisations, trade unions, employers, non-governmental organisations, children and parents.

The sheer volume and diversity of child labour is at the heart of the problem with those in the developed west calling for outright abolition countered by those in developing countries which favour a more gradualist approach.

The rallying cry at Oslo is to be the drive to hammer out an more pragmatic agreement outlawing the worst forms of child exploitation — slavery, bonded labour and prostitution — while leaving the



Norwegian Minister of Development and Human Rights Hilde Frøford Johnson opens the International Conference on Child Labour (Reuters photo)

more contested categories until later.

"The challenge is how to narrow the gap between aspirations and reality, between law and practice," said Assefa Bekele, the

International Labour Organisation's director of Working Conditions and Environment Department.

Mr. Bekele said he understood complaints from child rights advocates that many governments were "recalcitrant, indifferent and even lacking in compassion."

"But my experience in recent years is that most governments are genuinely interested in doing something about the problem. They are however faced with serious constraints," he said.

He mentioned debilitating poverty, capacity to deliver services and enforce the law, and political rigidities. "Change can only be

gradual — a hard, bitter truth that should guide our action and approach," he said.

The Norwegian government convened the Oslo conference, but the main players are two U.N. agencies — the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the ILO.

They are joined here by government ministers from 40 industrialised and developing countries as well as trade union and employer organisations, non-governmental groupings and leading experts on child labour.

The centrepiece of the conference is to be the adoption on the final day Thursday of an "Agenda for Action" mapping the way ahead in the battle against child labour.

Both ILO chief Michel Hansenne and UNICEF head Carol Bellamy will give keynote conference addresses Wednesday.

Argentine opposition wins big in mid-term parliamentary vote

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — Opposition parties won big in Sunday's local elections for congress here, soundly defeating President Carlos Menem's ruling Peronist Party throughout the country.

The mid-term vote is seen as a referendum on the Peronists' tough neo-liberal economic plan that has brought down inflation and increased growth at the cost of rising unemployment.

According to official results issued at midnight Sunday, the Peronists managed to hold onto only 52 of the 127 seats in the lower house of congress that were up for grabs.

Sixty of those seats went to a coalition of left-leaning parties called the Alliance, composed of the social-democrat Radicals and the centre-left Frepaso. The remainder were divided among nine smaller parties, most of them regional.

Sunday's vote replaces half of Argentina's chamber of deputies. Several local municipal and state offices were also on the ballot.

In the all-important province of Buenos Aires, where almost 40 per cent of the Argentine electorate lives, the Alliance was running eight percentage points ahead of the Peronists, formally known as the Justicialist Party.

Alliance candidate Graciela Fernandez Mejide, a member of Frepaso, surprised pundits by trouncing

Hilda Chiche Duhalde, wife of Buenos Aires governor Eduardo Duhalde, who had been portrayed as the Evita of the 1990s.

Late Sunday Mr. Menem gave a positive spin to his party's defeat in a televised address to the nation: "The 'most important victory,' he said, was the opposition's pledge to not substantially change his economic policies."

In the presentation Mr. Menem promised to remain in office until 1999 without substantially changing the country's economic policies.

However Foreign Minister Guido di Tella earlier raised the possibility of a cabinet reshuffling in the wake of the poor showing by the Peronists.

"Changes are possible, the president can always demand resignations," he said. "But I would not want to speculate on what will happen."

Without a Peronist majority in parliament, Mr. Menem would be forced to ally himself with regional parties and focus on easing the jobless rate, which is 16 per cent according to the government's conservative figures.

Mr. Menem voted early in the tiny town of Anillaco, saying he was "sure that the Peronists would win."

Mr. Menem campaigned hard in an attempt to head the electoral disaster for the Peronists. He was first

elected in 1989 and is barred from running for a third term in 1999.

A total of 72,600 police were mobilised to protect the 83,000 polling stations, some of which delayed in opening because electoral officials arrived late.

The only reported incident of violence occurred in Buenos Aires, where

extreme-right wing candidate Aldo Rico was punched by leftist militants as he walked out of a polling place.

Mr. Rico, a former army commander who led a failed military coup in 1987, was elected to local office for a small party in the city of San Miguel, just north-east of Buenos Aires.



Senator Graciela Mejide (right), centre-left candidate for Congress for the Frepaso-Radical Alliance opposed to the government of president Carlos Menem, raises her arms in victory after she and her party won the nationwide elections to renew half of the seats in National Congress (Reuters photo)

Police find evidence of 2 bodies in Belgium's 'house of horror'

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Investigators digging up the Brussels area home of a pastor suspected of murdering six relatives believe they may have uncovered evidence of two bodies, press reports said here Monday.

Sunday, RTL-TV reported investigators had found a set of bones belonging to either a hand or a foot, a report not confirmed by police.

Monday, reports said the apparent presence of a bone that did not belong with the others pointed to the presence of possibly one other body in the basement of the house in the Brussels suburb of Molenbeek.

Officials would not immediately confirm the latest reports.

The week-long search of one of the three houses belonging to Hungarian-born pastor Andras Pandi has in total uncovered fragments of a skull, a right thighbone, an arm and toe and finger joints, as well as shreds of underclothes.

Later Monday the investigation was to shift to a second property owned by Pandi, who is charged with killing two former wives and four of his eight children who disappeared between 1986 and 1989.

The other four children are still in Belgium, and the two still minors have been placed in state care.

The second home to be searched has a vast basement in six parts. To speed up the search, investigators planned to bring in dogs and a sonar-like device of the type used to

search the home of serial killers Frederick and Rosemary West in the English city of Gloucester.

Pandi, 71, denies the charges against him and has refused to say much to police since his arrest 10 days ago.

"He says nothing or denies everything, complaints of having a headache or asks to see his lawyers," said Berangere Haegemann, of the Brussels prosecutors office.

Belgian police, fearing he may have had more victims, are looking again at the files of missing persons dating from the late 1980s.

Investigators hunting a serial killer in Mons in southern Belgium who carves up his victims have also visited Pandi's house.

A parallel investigation is under way in Hungary where the pastor made regular visits. A house he owns in Dunakeszi, north of Budapest, has been searched but nothing found there.

Police suspect he had accomplices in Hungary who posed as his missing children, writing false letters in their names to give the impression they were still alive.

They are also trying to trace Hungarian women who responded to classified advertisements by Pandi as he searched for a third wife in the early 1990s.

Hungarian police will reopen the files of around 60 missing persons on Monday.

'98% of Anjouans vote for independence'

MUTSAMUDU, Comoros (R) — The leader of a secessionist movement on the Indian Ocean island of Anjouan said Monday that 98 per cent of the population had voted for independence from the Federal Republic of Comoros in a referendum Sunday.

Anjouan radio quoted Foundi Abdallah Ibrahim as saying he had dissolved the secessionist executive body and would soon announce a "legitimate government."

"I enjoy considerably the fact that you have democratically chosen to separate," Foundi Abdallah Ibrahim was quoted as saying.

The radio said that with 90 per cent of the ballot counted, some 99 per cent of Anjouan islanders had voted in the referendum and 98 per cent had voted in favour of independence.

A rebel official told Reuters that secessionist leaders were working on the composition of a new government to be announced later Monday.

The official said it would likely comprise five ministers and a number of secretaries of state.

Anjouan radio said Mr. Ibrahim had appointed a special commission made up of three judges, two former federal legislators and two civil administrators to examine and verify the results of the referendum.

Anjouan, which along with Grand Comore and Moheli gained independence from France in 1975, declared its secession in July and successfully repulsed an invasion in September by federal government troops sent to quash the rebellion.

In Addis Ababa Monday, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) said it would not recognise the referendum.

"The OAU rejects and condemns the result of the referendum and maintains its stand — the recognition of the territorial integrity of the federal Islamic Republic of Comoros," a spokesman for the Addis Ababa-based group told Reuters.

Sunday's referendum has also been rejected by Grand Comore and frowned upon by much of the rest of the world.

Japan sends helicopters to fight Indonesian fires

JAKARTA (R) — A Japanese firefighting team equipped with two Dauphin helicopters armed with infra-red tracking devices arrived Monday to join the fight against Indonesia's rampant bushfires.

The helicopters, supported by 43 firefighters and crew and able to pinpoint fires through thick smoke, are the latest in a series of Japanese aid measures to fight the fires, which has included mobile firefighting equipment, pumps, food, medical supplies and radios.

"The helicopters will start their operations Tuesday in Lampung, Sumatra to monitor conditions of fires in the forest by using the infra-red thermal radiometers, which can detect the hot spots even under the peat soil," Japanese Ambassador Takao Kawakami said.

"We will provide this video-taped information to the Indonesian and other international teams on the ground and air with suggestions of priority zones and fire-fighting techniques," Mr. Kawakami said in a speech at the Halim Perdanakusuma Airbus.

"The devastating forest fires and the suffocating plight of the people in Indonesia continues to be of the gravest concern of all the people in Japan," he said.

Indonesian officials said the Japanese helicopters would work with two Australian air tractor water-bombers currently based in Lampung.

Two U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft equipped as water bombers have been deployed to control fires in east Java.

The fires, many started by companies and individuals clearing land, have caused much smoke to drift across to neighbouring Singapore and Malaysia, polluting the air enough to damage people's health.

APEC network proposed to respond to emergencies

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Canada has proposed an APEC network to respond to emergencies and natural disasters in the Pacific region after smoky haze enveloped much of Southeast Asia due to raging forest fires in Indonesia, officials said Monday.

Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, backed by some of his counterparts in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, has proposed the network ahead of an APEC leaders' summit in Vancouver, Canada, next month.

"My foreign minister had put forward with some interest and support shown by other foreign ministers in the region the notion of looking at emergency preparedness within APEC," Leonard Edwards, Canada's assistant deputy minister for trade and economic poli-

cy, told AFP.

Mr. Edwards was speaking on the sidelines of an APEC senior officials' meeting here which he is chairing to lay the groundwork for the forum's summit on November 25.

"I think the issue of the haze has triggered, brought home the need for something like this," Mr. Edwards said of the proposed network "which is a means of consulting in information sharing and perhaps cooperating when it comes to disasters."

"This emergency preparedness is not targeted at the haze problem. It will be targeted at emergencies generally — it could be the environment, it could be natural disasters and so on," Mr. Edwards said.

He added that Canada, which is holding the APEC chair for 1997, made the proposal "so that APEC's value as a means

of supporting, aiding economies in times of emergency is stronger."

"We believe as chair it is very, very important APEC has to be seen to be responsive to developments in the region," he said.

U.S. Coordinator for APEC John Wolf said last week that climatic change and the environment would be one of the goals to be pursued by Washington in the run-up to the APEC leaders meeting.

"Environmental threats — as we have learned graphically from the terrible fires and haze affecting Indonesia and Malaysia and much of the region, and other more gradual threats such as marine and coral reef degradation, and global climate change — threaten to undermine our collective future," he said.

"These threats demand

our joint attention," Mr. Wolf said.

He also said that any APEC discussions on emergency preparedness would probably cover "institution building and how we can deal with advanced meteorological forecasting and preparation, mitigation of risks."

"You know, there is a drought this year. Some people are saying next year you'll end up with the reverse, and that there will be an unusual amount of rain. So next year's problem may not be droughts and fires but mud slides and floods," Mr. Wolf said.

APEC groups Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States.

Rare brain disease kills third Australian

MELBOURNE (R) — A rare brain disease has claimed its third life in Australia in two months, with a hospital Sunday reporting the death of a five-year-old boy in the country's remote north.

Doctors who fought to save the boy in the port city of Darwin made a preliminary diagnosis of the highly infectious meningococcal

disease, which attacks the blood or lining of the brain and spinal cord. It has raised alarm across the country.

The disease has also killed two women and forced surgeons in one extreme case a week ago to amputate all of a baby's limbs.

The Darwin boy fell ill Saturday morning and was admitted to hospital with

clinical signs of meningococcal disease, Dr Gary Lum, of Royal Darwin Hospital, told local news media Sunday.

"He succumbed to the infection yesterday evening," Dr Lum said.

The Australian army this month helped vaccinate 1,100 school students in a bid to prevent the spread of the disease after three pupils

from a college south of Sydney came down with it. One of the students, a 16-year-old girl, had her feet amputated.

More than 460 university students in Sydney have also been vaccinated after five, including Amanda Young, 18, who died two weeks ago, were diagnosed with the disease.

A nurse from the coastal

city of Lismore, north of Sydney, is also reported to have died from the disease.

Meningococcal infection is caused by bacteria that infect the blood or the lining of the brain and spinal cord. It is treatable with antibiotics and is normally spread through person-to-person contact such as mouth kissing and sharing food.

The Darwin boy was

admitted to the hospital Saturday morning with a severe rash but died suddenly that night despite intensive care treatment, Dr. Lum said.

Health authorities have cautioned against alarm, denying reports of an epidemic. They have assured the public the disease can be stopped with early diagnosis.

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The View from the Fourth Circle

By Rami G. Khouri

Three years after the Jordan-Israel peace accord

WHAT CAN we learn from the three years since October 1994, when the governments of Jordan and Israel signed their historic peace treaty? Conventional thinking has it that the Jordan-Israel peace is turning cold, that both peoples and governments are disappointed, and even that the peace is in trouble and may not endure. This may be too superficial an analysis which does not capture the full complexity of the many lessons about politics and human nature that we have learned in the past three years.

I would argue that the Jordan-Israel peace accord is a remarkable success; it is remarkable not because it has brought about a warm and tender peace after years of warfare, but rather because it has changed the Jordan-Israel relationship from one of abnormal estrangement among neighbours to one of relative normalcy among neighbours. I define normalcy in this respect as a full range of mutual perceptions, knowledge, interaction and sentiments between two people who had few contacts before.

Jordan and Israel no longer deal with one another primarily on the basis of ignorance and quasi-racist stereotypes. We judge each other today by the consequences of our personal encounters and first-hand knowledge of the other, which are not always pleasing or satisfying. We may or may not like one another more, or trust one another, but we know each other in a way that we did not three years ago. What we have learned about each other is profoundly important as a process of rehumanization of the other. We now criticise one another on the basis of real life experience, not on imagined fantasies or mutual anti-Semitism (which, for example, saw many Arabs claim that Jews only understood the language of war, and saw many Israelis claim that you could never trust any Arab).

Jordanians and Israelis have accepted and absorbed the political reality and the national legitimacy of the other, without necessarily fully embracing the other. Few people in Jordan speak any more of sending the Israeli Jews back to Europe, and few Israelis speak of making Jordan a Palestinian state.

The question of relations with Israel is routinely debated in Jordan today within political logistics that are very similar to how we debate relations with Iraq, Turkey,

Syria, Iran, Kuwait, the United States and other friendly yet often controversial folks.

The Jordanian-Israeli psychological rehumanization has been paralleled by a very extensive range of normal contacts among Israelis and Jordanians in the fields of economy, officialdom, transport, security, tourism, education, medicine, and many others. These contacts have built a firm foundation of Jordanian-Israeli normalcy that usually lacks warmth and is constricted in its breadth, but nevertheless compares relatively well with bilateral contacts with other states. I am neither applauding nor condemning this reality, but merely stating that we should not ignore it and that we should recognise its significance.

The wide range of personal, official, business and other contacts between Jordan and Israel since 1994 has been so deeply embedded in the binational consciousness that it has withstood the five powerful primary forces working against the warm consummation of the peace treaty — 1) the Israeli government's large ideological appetite for Arab land, 2) the Israeli people's clumsy haste to embrace Jordanians and have normal relations, 3) the chronic Israeli insistence on making Israeli security a higher priority than Palestinian or Arab security (rather than making them, for example, mutual and simultaneous pre-requisites for peace), 4) the hesitation of many or perhaps even most Jordanians to normalise relations with Israel before Israel achieves a full and fair peace with the Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrians, and 5) the occasional isolated attacks by Jordanians against Israeli targets in Jordan, and by Israelis against Jordanian and Palestinian targets in Jordan.

These acts and sentiments have certainly set back the peace-making process. Many of them, it is important to appreciate, predate the ideological bombast and political huffoonery of the Netanyahu government. Netanyahu and his cabinet accelerated and deepened the deterioration in Jordan-Israel relations, but they did not start it; the genesis of the deterioration is firmly anchored in the Peres-and-Labour-led government's aggressive policies in Jerusalem and Lebanon. I know Israelis and Jordanians who visited the other country in recent years, but are

afraid to do so today — for fear of getting physically assaulted in the other country, or politically assaulted in their own. Jordanian officials — the fellows who were doing the warming of the peace — now speak privately of the shattered trust that once bound Jordan and Israel, and of the need to rebuild that trust over time. They speak of it as a goal, a hope, but not necessarily a certainty.

That the 1994 peace accord has survived these serious obstacles, and that we continue today to seek further movement towards a comprehensive and just Arab-Israeli peace, signals the depth of the need for a just peace by both sides. The last three years have clarified the nature and the durability of this need. They have revealed what both sides should not do on the road to a just peace, and what both peoples demand he done in order to achieve the full promise of justice and peace.

The current state of formal normalcy in relations between Jordan and Israel is low-key, cool-to-frigid, often awkward, slightly embarrassed — yet remarkably durable. It reminds us that land-for-peace is a core political principle of Arab-Israeli negotiations, but not necessarily its only or even its most important one. The deeper and more powerful principle for both sides — as we learn from the last three years — is exchanging respect-for-respect, dignity-for-dignity, and, above all, equality-for-equality. Instead, we perceive Benjamin Netanyahu and his virtual cabinet as seeking peace on the basis of the supremacy of Jewish rights and the primacy of Israeli security, with Arab rights perpetually subservient to such requirements. No wonder that we have less warmth, and more coolness, three years after the signing of the peace treaty.

Jordanian-Israeli relations are so complex and erratic today precisely because the exchange of land-for-peace has not been accompanied by the wider human gestures and imperatives that are required for genuine stability and peace. All these problems are nicely encapsulated in the many current tensions in Jordanian-Israeli relations, which once promised to provide the model of a warm peace. Most of us in the Arab World place the blame for this squarely in the slippery lap of Benjamin Netanyahu.

Reading in history, thinking of the future

By Tomas Smetanka

COMING BACK from holidays in Czechia this year I brought some rare books that I was lucky to find in Prague's libraries. The Mysterious Amra, Under the Protection of Nuri, and the Manners and Customs of the Ruala Bedouins offer a wonderful account of what the country East of the Jordan River looked like in the time when their author Alois Musil, a Czech orientalist, visited here a century ago.

To a Czech reader (the first two books, Amra and Nuri are written in Czech) familiar with Jordan of today the stories told by Musil bring a special joy and excitement. One realises he encounters the same people his compatriot used to live with: Kaabneh, Bani Sakir, Ibn Shaalan, Abu Tayeh, to name some of those who Musil met during his numerous trips across the territory of Jordan. The reader learns how the lands of Adwan family around Salt began to be cultivated and vegetable production introduced, how the Ruala set their tents or how the author got to Amra, discovering it for the Europeans.

Certainly, it is encouraging to have a proof that contacts between people existed long before there was a Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and a Czech Republic. But what the books offer is more than that: it is, in a way, a testimony on how one important basis of Czech-Arab relations has been laid.

Alois Musil, Czech by birth and Austrian by citizenship until the emergence of independent Czechoslovakia (which happened on the 28 of October 1918, the day of today's national day) travelled extensively in the vast area of Arabian desert. Later he settled down in Prague and raised the idea and concept of the Institute of Oriental Studies to develop and promote economic and cultural relations of (at that time) Czechoslovakia and the Middle East, as well as of a school to teach Arabic and other Oriental languages. He helped to establish both and he left a major impact as a professor of Arabic at the Charles University as well. His activities produced a profound interest of numerous Czechs in the Arab World, its civilisation and language.

So when President Václav Havel, visiting Jordan last September, enjoyed the hospitality of the gathering of sheikhs in Wadi Rum, there was a sort of historical implication: it might have been somewhere here where Musa Bin Tshiki (as Musil was called by his Arab friends) has been healing the wounded hand of the great sheikh of Huweitat, Auda Bin Tayeh.

The presidential visit — as stated several times — came as an expression of excellent relations between our two countries, a demonstration of support for the regional peace process and especially for those willing to work actively for its success. It was a formal and apparent confirmation of the fact that the period of

somewhat formal ties — clearly marked on our side by the era of Communist rule — is ultimately behind and that there is a genuine will to communicate, cooperate, do business, consult, discuss, and interact more than before.

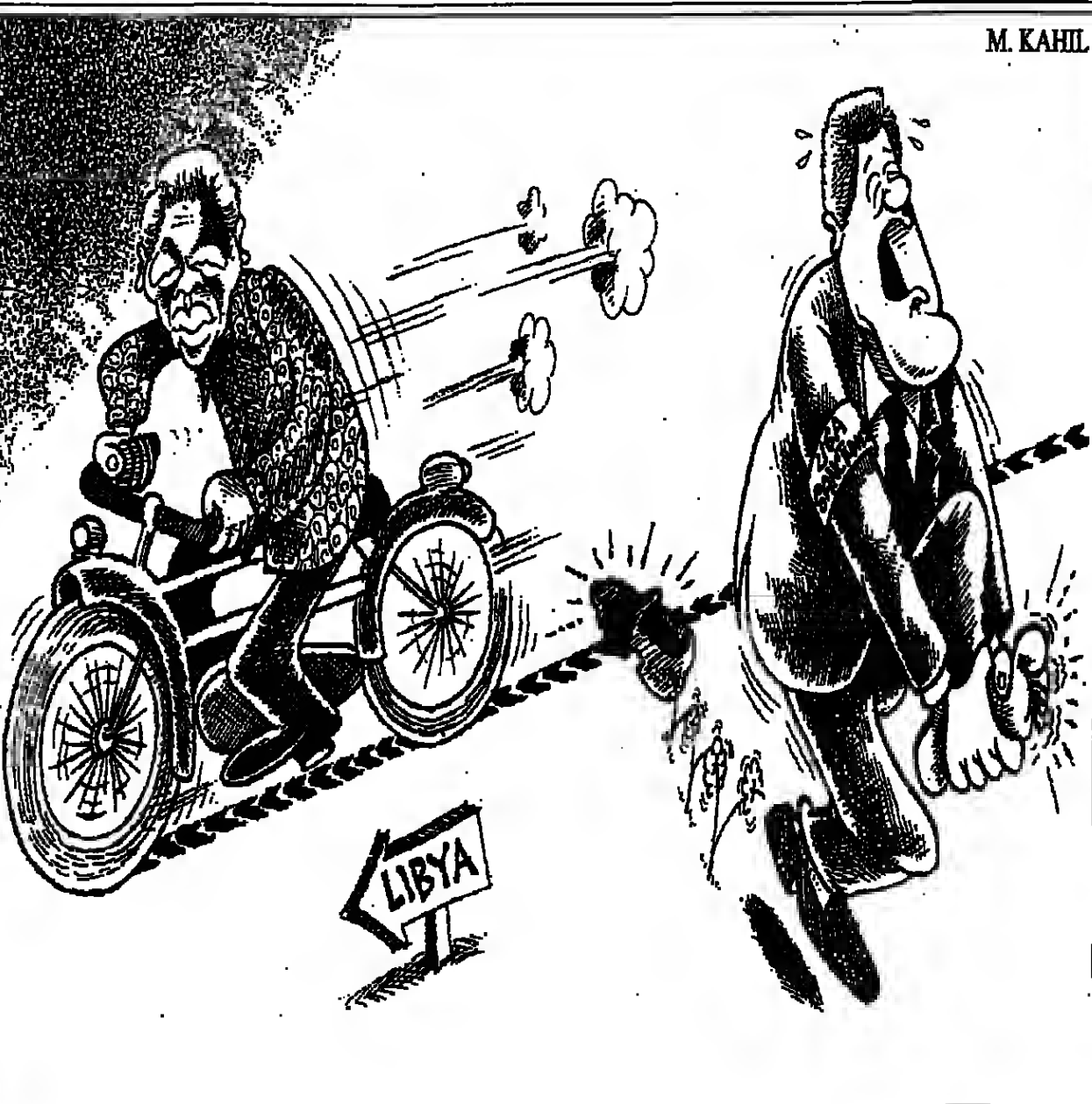
Examples proving not only the will, but the deeds, too, are ready at hand: HRH Crown Prince Hassan twice visited Prague in the past year, giving a strong push to bilateral contacts as well as important input into the discussions of Forum 2000 on the challenges of mankind at the threshold of the new millennium. Two missions to Jordan by Czech businessmen took place this year to identify products for export and import as well as to explore the possibility of establishing joint production. Two new agreements — on the protection and promotion of investments and on air-transport services — have been signed. A project of geological and technological evaluation of selected mineral resources of Jordan, financed by a grant from the Czech government, started to be implemented this year, opening a possibility for future industrial cooperation. Czech companies increased their activity, offering their capacities even for major projects, e.g., the Amman-Zarqa railway. A cooperation agreement between the Jordan University of Science and Technology and the Czech Agricultural University was signed and a joint project of cross-breeding of sheep has been launched. Czech culture continued to be

presented in Jordan: several performances by outstanding Czech musicians in Amman took place this year. A programme of cultural and educational cooperation was signed and started to be implemented: an exhibition of Jordanian children's drawings took place in Prague in September and first Czech students of Arabic arrived at the University of Jordan. The Jordanian-Czech Friendship Association was established in Amman. CSA, the Czech Airlines, is getting ready to introduce Amman as its new destination starting April 1998 with two weekly flights.

Some of the steps taken are more important than others, some are only introductory and simpler ones that require a follow-up. What I would like to see is wider personal contacts, increased trade (even if its volume doubled since 1995), concrete production cooperation, more Czech tourists discovering the attraction of Jordan. And, of course and above all, a good regional climate that would boost all this.

I am convinced this will come. With the exciting and inspiring history of our direct contacts, who would be afraid of the future?

The writer is the ambassador of the Czech Republic in Amman. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times on the occasion of his country's National Day which is celebrated today.



LETTERS

It's a women's problem

To the Editor:

WHY DO women rights crusaders focus their campaigns in such a way to suggest other men stand in the way of abolishing the unfortunate practice of female circumcision?

In my opinion it is women themselves who perpetuate the practice with such zeal. It is women who insist that their daughters be circumcised.

If elite African and Middle Eastern women desire to bring this practice to an end, then they must convince women themselves of that need. No man, I guess, would grumble at any measure that would ensure profound sexual enjoyment with his wife.

But no amount of legislation, elitist seminars or conferences will put an end to the female circumcision. The rural women who constitute the majority of our women folk do not attend these talk-shows. Even when a handful of them are "arranged" in some form of ceremonial presence to massage the ego of the elite, they gain nothing from the sessions. What with the big grammar at such fora?

All those women who claim that female circumcision is a primary problem hindering our march to democracy and industrial development should organise themselves into working groups to address their kind in the maternity wards, schools and markets, particularly in the rural areas of country. But they must arm themselves with convincing reason on the necessity for the desired attitudinal change.

The final decision should, however, rest with the individual who invariably must bear responsibility for the consequences of her actions — on herself or on her daughter.

J.K. Olayinka Hassan
Amman

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Arab Al Yawm's Oreib Rintawi took up the issue of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty now three years old, saying that the practices of the present Israeli government have returned the region to square one with no real peace achieved. According to Rintawi, by signing the treaty, Jordan succeeded in demarcating its borders and regaining part of its water resources, but nothing more has been achieved because of the intransigent Israeli position and Netanyahu's determination to abort the peace process. Nothing of the promised regional projects has been carried out, Rintawi said. He added that extremists in the Israeli government are still bent on considering Jordan as the substitute Palestinian homeland. He said that after three years the prime minister of Israel sent Mossad agents to kill Jordanian citizens in Amman thus dealing a devastating blow to prospects of peaceful coexistence. The writer said Jordan has no alternative but to be more reserved in its dealings with the Jewish state and has no alternative but to seek a stronger internal unity.

Al Ra'i's Fakhri Kavar addressed press reports in the press about forged voter cards and the repetition of names in the official voter lists in various districts, describing the alleged development as very dangerous. The writer said the situation resembles that of the 1993 elections when many forged cards were discovered. The disappearance of so many cards, said the writer, has prompted the official media and the government to declare that 1.25 million cards have already been distributed to voters when in reality most of the people have not yet received their cards. What seems to be happening now, is a strong rivalry and a feverish attempt on the part of certain candidates to prevent their rivals or adversaries from obtaining enough votes to win by preventing the cards from reaching the electorate. Kavar said. He suggested that the government scrap the voter cards and allow the voters to cast ballots after producing family registration books which will be stamped to prevent them from repeat voting.

Monarch says peace-making atmosphere not encouraging as when treaty was launched

(Continued from page 1)

Israel following the assassination attempt of a Hamas leader in Jordan last month.

"But the hope is high that efforts will continue to achieve a comprehensive and just peace for which the Palestinians aspire... and to ensure the return of Syrian and Lebanese rights," the King said.

President Saleh, who arrived here from Egypt, lauded Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and said that the Israeli Mossad attempt to assassinate Hamas politburo chief Khaled Misha'al was a clear proof of Israeli terrorism.

"They are the party which practices terrorism most and what happened to Khaled Misha'al in Jordan is the ultimate type of terrorism, yet we heard no world condemnation to this act," the president said.

Mr. Saleh said that his country will attend the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference in the Qatari capital next month adding that the Yemeni delegation will be on a low level.

"Our presence is merely a complementary participation and a gesture of appreciation and respect for Qatar and its people," the president said.

"The problem is with the Israeli government which complicates the peace process and continues its settlement building and occupation policies... We believe that the conference will bring no result and it will be like the previous meetings in Amman, Morocco and Cairo," said the president, who was referring to the previous MENA summits.

"There is no problem with the Qatari government, the problem is sitting with the government of Netanyahu [at the conference] who wants to make use of this conference. Arabs will not benefit from it. It is part of the indirect normalisation of ties [with Israel]... the only party that will benefit from it is the government of Netanyahu in the framework of the indirect normalisation of ties with Arabs," the president added.

Jordan and Yemen are among the few Arab states which declared they will take part in the MENA conference which drew a wide range of criticism from several Arab countries like Syria, Saudi Arabia and

Egypt.

Syria, which spearheaded a campaign to cancel the summit, urged all Arab states to boycott the meeting and called for holding an Arab economic conference instead.

Shifting to the situation in Iraq, King Hussein said that Jordan will work hard to ease the "suffering of the Iraqi people" and called for maintaining the unity of Iraq and its territorial integrity.

"What is preoccupying and cause pain to me is... the continuation of the suffering of the Iraqi people," said the King, who was responding to a question on the latest U.N. resolution against Iraq adopted earlier this week, and which threatened more sanctions on the Iraqi government.

"I do not know where the new developments will lead us and the reaction that has followed. But Jordan will continue to work within its means and capabilities to remove the suffering," the King said.

The Yemeni president, who visited France and Germany this week, said that he briefed His Majesty on the latest developments in the demarcation of borders between his country

and neighbouring Saudi Arabia and said that the two sides are on the verge of concluding the agreement.

He said that his meeting with Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz in Rome recently was a "positive step" towards closing this file.

Mr. Saleh said that he also briefed the King on the latest internal developments in his country especially the difficulties with the World Bank following the implementation of the economic and administrative reform programme.

The president said that the trilateral meeting in Cairo on Sunday, that grouped Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, was aimed at discussing the latest developments in the talks between the Palestinians and Israel.

He added that Mr. Arafat has briefed them on the hardships and difficulties which the Palestinians are facing.

The Yemeni President expressed his country's appreciation of the role the Kingdom played in 1994 to reach a charter between all Yemeni parties to unite Yemen.

Bank troop pullout that is due by November.

But Mr. Netanyahu has said he will not even carry out the pullout until the PNA does more to crack down on Islamists.

Mr. Netanyahu must also contend with Orthodox religious legislators who control about one-third of his coalition and demand immediate passage of a bill that would rule out recognition of conversions to Judaism carried out by Reform and Conservative rabbis — whose movements are dominant among U.S. Jews.

Finance Minister Yacov Neeman has been meeting leaders of the various streams to forge a compromise. Last week Mr. Netanyahu promised his religious coalition allies that if none is found he would pass the bill, but it seems unlikely he has the votes.

Israel frees 26 Palestinians as part of deal with Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

The 26 were released from Israeli civilian and army prisons and were handed over to Palestinian National Authority (PNA) officials in the West Bank, officials said.

Two of those released later returned to their homes in Gaza, officials there said.

The release of four of the detainees was held up for several hours as "technical problems" delayed President Ezer Weizman from signing the necessary release papers, a prison spokeswoman said.

Israel army radio said a further 10 prisoners would be released later in the week as part of the deal reached last month with King Hussein to release some 70 Palestinians in exchange for the two Israeli secret agents.

Israel already freed 10 Palestinians, including the spiritual leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, as part of an agreement to prevent a break up in relations with Jordan following a Sept. 25 Israeli attempt to murder Khaled Misha'al — Hamas leader in Amman.

Israel is holding some 3,000 prisoners, mostly for alleged security offences, and their release has been repeatedly demanded by PNA under the terms of interim peace agreements.

Negotiations on the prisoner issue have been frozen for months.

One of the freed prisoners, Khaled Hassan Khaled, 24, a member of Fatah from the West Bank, stressed that Monday's release did not mark an easing of Israeli policy.

"This is not a goodwill gesture from Israel because we were released as part of a deal with Jordan," he said.

"If Israel releases 10 Palestinians, they will just arrest more," he told Agence

France Presse.

His prediction was already true as Palestinian sources said the army had arrested 16 students suspected of belonging to the Islamic Jihad group early Monday in a village outside Bethlehem.

In an apparent bid to ease anger on the Israeli right over Monday's prisoner release, Israel late Sunday released and deported a Jewish-American extremist, Allen Goodman, who opened fire on worshippers at Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque in 1982, killing one person and wounding 11.

Oldest electoral district in Jordan boasts diverse socio-political reality

(Continued from page 1)

won 3,050 votes in 1993.

In the Jordan Valley, which has the highest number of candidates, 21 Muslim candidates including 13 from the Abbad tribe are competing. In this highly tribal-affiliated region, 17,298 people registered to vote. In the previous elections, and for the first time, one deputy representing the central Jordan Valley succeeded in securing a parliamentary seat. This deputy, Fawzi Tueimeh, who won 2,038 votes. Former chief of the Natural Resources Authority Kamal Jraisat, publisher of the now-suspended weekly Al Mithaq Nahed Hatar, Hana A'raj and Raib Makhameh are also running.

In Balqa only one woman is running, Ajjayeb Dawahneh of the Abbad tribe. Observers say her chances of winning are very slim.

Russian FM makes surprise return to Syria with message from Israel

(Continued from page 1)

Russian delegation said Sunday that Mr. Primakov had brought "new Syrian ideas" to Israel on how to resume the talks, which have run around over Israel's refusal to withdraw from the Golan Heights.

Israeli officials were tight-lipped about Mr. Primakov's talks here.

Asked about Mr. Primakov's reported plans to return to Damascus, Mr. Levy would only say Monday that after hearing from the Russian diplomat about Syria's latest ideas, "we presented our positions and it is important that these messages will be carried from one side to the other."

Israeli-Syrian peace talks have been suspended since February 1996 and efforts to resume them have run aground on Syria's demand that the negotiations begin with an Israeli agreement in principle to withdraw from the occupied Golan Heights.

The Israel has occupied the strategic plateau since the 1967 Middle East war. Mr. Netanyahu has refused to accept such a precondition for a resumption of talks, but has said Syria was free to raise the territorial issue in the negotiations. During an

Facing political storm, Netanyahu retains hardline toward Arabs

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinian National Authority (PNA) unless it did more to fight against Islamists.

Mr. Netanyahu also held out little prospect that he would moderate his position on the Golan Heights, which Syria wants returned in exchange for peace. "We see the Golan as territory that is essential to the state of Israel," he said.

"There is nothing easy in what we are trying to do," he said. "Reality is not easy. This is a difficult area, not Disneyland, an area where many of our neighbours still do not accept our presence."

Opposition Labour Party leader Ehud Barak responded with a ferocious attack on Mr. Netanyahu, who listened red-faced and grinding his teeth as Mr. Barak excoriated him as an inexperienced incompetent gambling with Israel's lives.

"A moment of truth is arriving... The writing on the wall is written in

flames," Labour leader Barak shouted. "We are being thrown into... God forbid, an unnecessary war."

"As one who headed the army I say that Israel today is led by a man who hasn't the judgement or wisdom... to get us out of the catastrophe he is pushing us into," Mr. Barak, who was once Mr. Netanyahu's direct commander in the army. "War is not a picnic!"

The premier has survived a scandal-plagued 20 months in power, but he trails Mr. Barak in the polls and his problems are mounting.

Half the country is in a funk over the collapse of the peace process. Mr. Netanyahu barely escaped prosecution over an influence-peddling scandal a few months ago. And he is still dealing with fallout from a murder attempt against a Hamas official in Jordan last month.

The prime minister survived a no-confidence vote Monday by a 60-46 vote.

But in coming weeks the challenges will pile up.

Within days the government is to present the Knesset with a \$55 billion 1998 budget that drastically slashes funds to social programmes.

The cuts are needed because of declining tax revenues resulting from an economic slump that Mr. Netanyahu's critics attribute to the decline of the peace process. But they will directly affect Israel's poor, who form the bulk of the right-wing electorate that swept Mr. Netanyahu to power in May 1996.

The five-member Geshet faction headed by Foreign Minister David Levy is threatening to bring down the government unless the programmes are restored. The government falls if the budget does not pass in the Knesset by the end of the year.

Mr. Levy is also threatening to resign and take his faction with him over the crisis in peace talks. Mr. Levy wants Israel to be generous in a West

Bank troop pullout that is due by November.

But Mr. Netanyahu has said he will not even carry out the pullout until the PNA does more to crack down on Islamists.

Mr. Netanyahu must also contend with Orthodox religious legislators who control about one-third of his coalition and demand immediate passage of a bill that would rule out recognition of conversions to Judaism carried out by Reform and Conservative rabbis — whose movements are dominant among U.S. Jews.

Finance Minister Yacov Neeman has been meeting leaders of the various streams to forge a compromise. Last week Mr. Netanyahu promised his religious coalition allies that if none is found he would pass the bill, but it seems unlikely he has the votes.

Armouti, veteran media practitioner and diplomat, takes over communication aspects of 1997 elections

(Continued from page 1)

framework of what may be termed as Jordan's strategic objectives at this time," and summarised these objectives as "guaranteeing a high turnout at the polling stations and reflecting Jordan's democratic image as a country undergoing a democratic process which is credible, honest, transparent and congruent."

Dr. Armouti said as of today he will hold press conferences at the Prime Ministry daily, "and even two meetings per day if necessary."

"It was no accident that the Prime Ministry was chosen as the venue for these conferences, because we wanted the briefings to take a political form and give them weight," Dr. Armouti added.

In reply to a question whether there will be more corrections to the registered voters lists, in addition to the 80,000 repeated names that were discovered and expunged last week, Dr. Armouti ensured that "the correction process will continue," and suggested that a clear announcement of new measures to expunge repetitions and correct irregularities in the listing process was imminent. The final registered voter lists announced by the Ministry of Interior included 1,890,035 names, a figure that opposition candidates and independent observers have judged far too high when compared with the Kingdom's 4,444,000 estimated population.

Taking into account that armed and security forces members (estimated at

200,000) are not eligible voters and an estimated 2,357,100 citizens are below the voting age of 19, opposition leaders say that the number of registered voters should be lower than the official total.

Dr. Armouti also pledged his commitment to look into and confront the press on other current controversial issues, such as opposition candidates' allegations of having been threatened by officials and encountering problems in finding places to hold their public campaign meetings.

"I was promised not only full transparency from the [concerned] ministries," he said, "but also to be briefed and informed on all developments, particularly those concerning such complaints."

According to his mandate, Dr. Armouti is to report directly to and consult with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

The appointment document issued by the Prime Ministry stipulates that "ministers and officials shall make available to the spokesperson directly, daily, and whenever needed, statements and information that will help him fulfil his job. In addition to a daily report on different cases the government is concerned with from both the interior and foreign affairs ministries."

In addition, the mandate states, "the Head of Elections at the Ministry of Interior will supply the spokesperson at all times with information and statements regarding candidacies and elections before they are published or broadcast."

Primakov in Amman on fourth leg of Russia's peace process revival tour

(Continued from page 1)

the Russian minister met with Syrian President Hafiz Assad and presented "new ideas" from the Israeli government to resume the talks between the two sides.

Mr. Primakov, whose country is looking for an active peace-making role in the region, visited Damascus earlier this week before he went to Israel on Sunday.

The Russian official, an expert on Arab affairs and a former intelligence chief, has said that Russia wants to mediate between Syria and Israel to revive the stalled peace talks.

Mr. Primakov said following his meeting with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in the West Bank town of Ramallah on Monday that "Russia will do its utmost to get the peace

process out of its current crisis. But this is only possible if the two sides abide by the agreements," Agence France Presse quoted him as saying.

"It's not just that the present Israeli government should abide by the agreement which the previous governments signed with the Palestinians, it should also abide by the agreements which itself has signed," Mr. Primakov said to reporters following his meeting with President Arafat.

He said he was referring in particular to the Hebron accord reached by Palestinian leader Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in January which committed Israel to conducting a three-stage troop withdrawal from West Bank areas by mid-1998.

Israeli gunman released 8 years early, flies to U.S.

(Continued from page 1)

24 years, Goodman has served two-thirds of that and would have eight years to go.

Prison authority spokeswoman Orli Harel said Goodman was released from Ayalon prison at 9 p.m. local time and taken to Ben Gurion Airport, where he was scheduled to fly to the U.S. later in the evening. His exact U.S. destination

was not released.

In 1994, during a 72-hour furlough Goodman was detained trying to enter the Al Aqsa Mosque again. At the time, he told Israel TV: "Terrorism is a young man's game. I am too old for terrorism. After the age of 50, it's time for all good terrorists to retire."

There was no immediate comment on Goodman's release from Palestinian or U.S. officials.

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Japan grants Jordan \$6m for vocational training centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — Japan will provide the Kingdom with \$6 million in grants to train Jordanians in machinery, sheet metal processing and welding at the newly established Specialised Training Institute of the Vocational Training Corporation at Sahab Industrial Estate, according to a statement by the Japanese Embassy.

During this period, six Japanese experts will assist trainees in Jordan, while 20 other Jordanian instructors and administrators will be trained in Japan in order to take over the whole operation of training by the end of the project, the statement added.

It said that Japan will be providing Jordan with training equipment at a cost of \$3.5 million.

The project was Monday inaugurated by Minister of Labour Saleh Khasawneh, and Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Takayuki Kimura, at the institute.

In the remarks at the opening ceremony, during which the list of equipment to be provided by Japan was presented to the minister, Mr. Kimura said, "vocational training is indispensable in the effort of promoting economic development, and this institute will be providing important training to raise technical level in the machinery and metal processing, which is very much in demand in the labour market in Jordan."

"In the past, Japan has provided three Project-Type Technical Coopera-

tion to Jordan, which were successfully implemented and taken over by the Jordanian side: The Electronics Service and Training Centre (RSS), the Electric Power Training Centre (NEPCO), and the Computer Technology Development at Training Centre (RSS). These centres, besides training Jordanians, now provide training in two kinds of special courses, one for Palestinians and the other for other Arab nationals utilising Japanese financial support," said the statement.

Single Gulf currency needs common money policy — Suweidi

ABU DHABI (R) — Benefits to a unified Gulf currency would only be realised if monetary and fiscal policy within the six Gulf Arab states was harmonised first, United Arab Emirates Central Bank Governor Sultan Nasser Al Suweidi said Monday.

"The most important benefit of a unified currency would be if monetary, credit, banking and fiscal policies were harmonised and centralised," he said.

"Then the benefits of a common currency can be realised," he told an investment conference.

"Once there is convergence in inflation, interest rates, ratio of deficit to GDP, ratio of public debt to GDP and unit wage costs it is possible, practicable and beneficial to have a unified currency managed by one central institution."

Five of the six currencies are pegged to the U.S. dollar and have not changed in more than a decade, so the cross rates in the Gulf have been constant since then. Kuwait's has fluctuated marginally with the exception of the Gulf War, the governor said.

"There is no exchange rate risk among the five currencies. Whatever the benefits of a unified currency, they are already taking place."

He said the exception was the relatively minor exchanges related to travel, tourism and money changing activities.

"We still have a long way to go, but the march has travelled a long way," Suweidi said.

Gulf industrial investments increase by 23.5 % in 1996

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Industrial investments in Gulf Arab countries jumped by 23.5 per cent in 1996 as the states pushed ahead with a drive to diversify their oil-reliant economies, a Gulf official said Monday.

The six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states had pumped a total of nearly \$77.8 billion into non-oil industries by the end of 1996, said Nasser Al Kaud, director of studies and planning at the Riyadh-based GCC secretariat.

The number of industrial establishments reached 6,468, including 20 major joint ventures worth around \$2.7 billion.

"There was an increase of 23.5 per cent in investments and 7.6 per cent in the number of industrial units in 1996 compared with the previous year," he told a Gulf economic conference in Abu Dhabi.

Kaud, a Saudi, said the investments have pushed the manufacturing sector's contribution to the GCC gross domestic product to 9.5 per cent from around 4.3 per cent in 1976, when the industrial drive gained momentum.

But he added such an achievement remained below the GCC's target as industrial exports are still a fraction of the group's oil sales.

More investments were needed and new incentives should be introduced by regional states to attract foreign technology.

He urged GCC governments to pursue a policy of encouraging the private sector and to better exploit offset programmes, under which foreign arms suppliers re-invest part of the weapons deal's value in civilian projects.

Billions of dollars have already been invested by France, Britain, the United States and other arms makers in productive ventures in the GCC states, which formed a political, defence and economic alliance in 1981.

GCC states — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — produce around 13.5 million barrels per day of crude oil, fetching them more than two-thirds of their total income. They are seeking to ease reliance on oil because of its volatile prices.

MEMR Announcement

Results of the Prequalification Evaluation for the First Independent Private Power Project in Jordan

The Ministry of Energy & Mineral Resources (MEMR) is pleased to announce that eleven (11) highly regarded international firms have been accepted as Prequalified to compete for the development of the first Independent Private Power (IPP) Project in Jordan.

MEMR announced in July and issued in August a Prequalification Document in accordance with MEMR and World Bank Procurement Guidelines for the selection of Qualified Sponsors to develop a 300 MW to 450 MW Fossil-Fired Power Station in Jordan. Ninety five (95) firms responded to the invitation to obtain the Prequalification Document, and seventeen (17) firms or consortia submitted Prequalification Statements to MEMR by September 30. Of these applicants, the following eleven firms or consortia are now on the short list to continue to the bidding stage to develop this power station.

Lead Sponsors & Partners (and Country of Registration/Office)

1. ABB Energy Ventures B.V. (Netherlands) with SNAM (Italy) and Amoco (USA)
2. The AES Corporation (USA)
3. Ansaldo Energia (Italy) with ENEL (Italy)
4. Bechtel Enterprises International Ltd. (U.K.)
5. CEA International Inc. (Bermuda/USA) with Sithe (USA) and Marubeni (Japan)
6. Electricite De France International S.A. (France)
7. Enron (USA) with Mitsubishi (Japan)
8. El Paso Energy (USA) with Black & Veatch (USA)
9. National Power PLC (U.K.)
10. Southern Energy Incorporated (USA)
11. Tractebel (Belgium)

MEMR is now completing the project definition stage and plans to issue the Request for Proposals (RFP) by January, 1998. Bidders would be given three months to respond, and the selection of the Sponsor should occur by next summer. The new plant should help meet the Kingdom's electrical power needs through the year 2004, and the first unit could be producing power by 2001 or 2002.

Eng. Ahmad Bashir
Secretary General

GULF AIR ATTENDS IATA MEETING

GULF AIR is slated to take part in a general assembly meeting of the Arab Air Carriers Organisation (AACO) due on November 1 in Amman, Jordan.

Gulf Air is also planning to take part in the annual general meeting of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) scheduled for Nov 3-4 in Amman.

Sheikh Ahmad Ben Seif Al Nahyan, chief executive officer of Gulf Air, is due to arrive in Amman to take part in the two meetings as the head of a Gulf Air delegation comprising some of the airline's senior officials.

Taking part in the meetings are representatives of major airlines which have membership in the two organisations in addition to experts in civil aviation and international air transport institutions.

At the meetings the participants will discuss important subjects connected with means to upgrade air transport services and enhance cooperation and co-ordination among air carriers. Gulf Air's participation is part of the airline's efforts to promote its active role in various regional and international forums.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1997

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) No matter what you do, it's already finished by now. Don't waste time going over it in your mind. Don't get bogged down in paperwork, either. That's a waste of your natural talents. You get to be the authority figure instead. Do make sure the job gets done, however.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 20) There'll be a little more stress in the workplace than you had before. That's because you're facing a job you don't like. A person who owes you money might be better suited for this task. Have that one do the job you hate, and work off part of the debt at the same time.

Gemini: (May 21 to June 21) Your life seems a little better. So what are you waiting for? You and your sweetheart need to hit the road, bound for excitement and adventure. Right? Wrong. You can't get away for a few hours. You have a work. Well, maybe you can get away for a few hours later on tonight. It's definitely worth a try.

Scorpio Children: (June 22 to July 21) You're so busy, you haven't had time to fuss over your love and family. Tonight, do something special for the loves ones. You'll also be doing something very good for yourself. It will make you more successful, as well as about everything you do this week. Relax.

Leo: (July 22 to August 21) Gather information so you can make a wise decision. You don't have all the facts you need quite yet. To make sure things go smoothly, set up an agenda. If you wait for somebody to do this, you'll wait forever. Don't worry, you'll get your job as you go along.

Virgo: (August 22 to September 22) You're going to spend money to make money. If your plan is already thought out, this will not be upsetting. You'll be really prepared. When you can say that all the time, you'll be amazed. If it's coming as a surprise, you'll be upset. Keep studying.

Libra: (September 23 to October 22) Any minute you'll feel your creative energies kicking into gear. You'll be awesome, but don't try to do everything. Give away all the jobs you don't like. Concentrate on doing what you do well and the money will come.

Sagittarius: (October 23 to November 21) There's a lot you have to do, and you're resisting. You're not doing it. If you're not careful, you'll be in a headache, if you're not careful, you'll be in a headache. You won't know your own mind. Instead of worrying, plan ahead.

Capricorn: (November 22 to December 21) You're going to accomplish more this morning. You might not realize how much strain you've been under. Make a list about it will reduce the tension. Make a list about it will reduce the tension. Go out to dinner with someone you've known for years.

Quadrant: (December 22 to January 20) Your career is making more demands on your time lately. There are plenty of things you want to do at home. How will you manage? Well, you'll get a friend to do some of it for you. Multiply the number of hands, feet and brains on this job and you'll be amazed.

Aquarius: (January 21 to February 19) A friend from far away brings exciting news this morning. It's not a good idea to be late for work, though. The boss is watching your every move. He or she is smart. At least you're in a more cooperative mood. If you're really subversive, at least you're being nice about it!

Pisces: (February 20 to March 20) There's money coming into your account. If you don't know of any, get busy. Make this condition work for you. Call up somebody who owes you, and remind the person to pay up. It's also a good day to sell. If you're not much of an entrepreneur, this is a good day to learn.

Distribution of October: Opal — Turquoise

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Tiny particle
- 5 Mine car
- 9 Patisserie
- 14 Apres bath wear
- 15 One of the Inner
- 16 Hibiscus
- 18 Miss Oyl
- 17 Composer
- 18 Stravinsky
- 18 Buffoon
- 20 Father of Odyseus
- 22 Business abbr.
- 23 Go downhill?
- 24 Black Sea resort
- 26 Court calendar
- 26 Pet
- 31 Ninth planet
- 33 Without help
- 34 Openings
- 38 Auctioneer's word
- 39 Idler
- 40 Engrossed
- 41 Most robust
- 43 Narrow channel
- 44 Clear the tape
- 45 Dishearten
- 46 Scratched
- 48 Landside material
- 51 Long time
- 52 culpa
- 54 Pillsbury
- 58 Foolish one
- 61 Tessera
- 62 More faithful
- 63 Sea bird
- 64 Dutch cheese
- 65 Monica of tennis
- 66 Homeowner's document
- 67 Gangplank

DOWN

- 1 Seed coat
- 2 Roman party wear?
- 3 Shawm's descendant
- 4 Clown
- 5 Opportune
- 6 Bird's place
- 7 Hill dweller
- 8 Bamako's locale
- 9 Blacklist, in a way
- 10 TV alien
- 11 Newsstand
- 12 Call forth
- 13 Set ablaze again
- 19 Last
- 21 Weed
- 25 Places in proximity
- 27 Fool
- 28 Ready money
- 29 Sunburn soother
- 30 Vincent Lopez' theme song
- 32 Fast time
- 34 Son of Zeus
- 35 Steak order
- 36 Beowulf, e.g.
- 37 RBL, e.g.
- 38 Royal crown
- 42 Quavers
- 43 Observed
- 45 Covered loosely
- 46 Small change
- 47 France's longest river
- 48 Declare void
- 50 Hag
- 53 Copied
- 55 Verdi opera
- 56 Close-mouthed one
- 57 Dole's running mate
- 58 Declare void
- 59 Letter
- 60 Mine stuff

Peanuts

THE WAY I SEE IT, YOU HAVE TWO CHOICES...

YOU CAN HELP ME WITH MY SPELLING WORDS.

OR YOU CAN TAKE THE BLAME FOR THE INK I SPILLED DOWN THE COLLAR OF THE KID WHO SITS IN FRONT OF ME.

OKAY, LET'S SEE WHAT THE FIRST SPELLING WORD IS.

YOU ALWAYS TAKE THE EASY WAY OUT, DON'T YOU?

Andy Capp

SAME AGAIN, MISTER WONDERFUL?

PLEASE, DEAR AND ONE FOR YOURSELF

THE NEW BARMAID DOESN'T HAVE MUCH TASTE, EH, FLO?

NOT A LOT, MUM, BUT WHAT SHE LACKS IN TASTE SHE MAKES UP IN TIPS

SHE'D HAVE TO

Mutt'n Jeff

JEFF, I KNOW I HAD ONE CIGAR LEFT IN THE HOUSE! CAN YOU HELP ME FIND IT?

I FOUND IT, MUTT, IN YOUR BEDROOM!

OH, GOOD! HOW DID YOU FIND IT?

ROTTEN! IT MADE ME SICK!

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen

"I wouldn't mind a routine examination if the only thing you examined was my routine!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TEAGA

GELBI

HUMILS

NARCLE

Answer: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: ABOVE LATHE BEHEAD CHALET

Answer: Why the cop was in the jazz club — HE HAD THE BEAT

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Construction sector is in deep recession, Abu Ghida says

**** STATISTICS CONDUCTED** by the Jordan Engineers Association covering the period from January 1997 until the end of August have clearly showed the high degree of recession in the construction sector. According to Hani Abu Ghida, the association's vice president, the volume of construction has declined by 20 per cent as the association has authorised building 2.8 million square metres during the first eight months of this year compared to 3.4 million square metres during the same period of 1996.

Mr. Abu Ghida did not expect the volume to exceed four million square metre by the end of this year noting that construction covered a total of six million square metres during the whole of 1996. To indicate how deep the recession is, the vice president compared the volume of construction to the year 1992 when the association authorised a total of seven million square metres of construction.

In the industrial sector, the area was over 300,000 square metres during the first eight

months of 1996 but the volume during the first eight months of this year did not exceed 150,000 square metres. The drop was also evident in the commercial sector where the construction volume was down from 760,000 square metres to 425,000 square metres.

He revealed statistics showing that the number of large construction projects is on the decline. He said that the association approved only 10 projects the area of each was more than 10,000 square metres. Approvals were given to 20 projects each between 5,000 square metres and 10,000 square metres. Projects with areas ranging between 2,000 square metres and 3,000 square metres totalled 103 projects.

Mr. Abu Ghida stressed that the construction sector "moves" between 40 to 60 per cent of the national economy in addition to the employment that it provides and, any recession in the construction sector, will consequently reflect negatively on the economy in general (Al Dustour).

Company rents large plot of land to set up free zone on Jordan-Israel border

**** A JORDANIAN** company has rented a 500,000 square metres plot of land in the Sheikh Hussein area to order to set up a private commercial free zone on the borders between Jordan and Israel. The free zone will have tourist, industrial and services investments in addition to duty-

free shops. Industrial investments will aim at exports to outside markets. Foreign investors will also invest in this scheme which will include setting up hotels and maintain cars and other equipment (Al Dustour).

Gulf closer to privatisation but caution prevails, analysts

ABU DHABI (R) — Gulf Arab countries are moving closer to giving the private sector a bigger role in their oil-led and state-dominated economies, but they will continue to be very cautious on privatisation, analysts said Sunday.

"Although privatisation has come slowly in the Gulf, there are signs the countries of the region are more receptive than ever before to reforming their public enterprises," said Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, the World Bank's representative in Saudi Arabia.

"We have passed the phase here of privatisation rhetoric," Gulf Investment Corp chief economist Sharif Ghalib said.

Delegates at a conference on privatising the Gulf energy sector heard that, facing budget deficits, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and United Arab Emirates could not rely on oil income to finance huge infrastructure development any more.

Instead they needed to reform their regulatory environment, conscript the help of foreign firms for technology transfer and foreign investors for financing, and mobilise domestic capital.

"Gulf governments cannot count on a substantial rise in oil revenues in the next five years to finance infrastructure. Alternative sources of financing must be found," Ghalib said.

Gulf states had to spend some \$100 billion developing oil and gas until 2010, including \$20 billion on oil refining alone over the next 10 years, he said. In three to five years spending on major energy projects would be nearly \$80 billion, he added.

Saudi Arabia has said it needs to spend \$117 billion on power infrastructure up to 2020.

Shaikh said the main argument for privatisation was that the private sector was more efficient than the public sector.

But he said Gulf states, which are trying to cut reliance on volatile oil earnings, needed to decide which industries were "strategic" before any sell-offs.

Gulf states have cited the strategic nature of the oil sector — which accounts for some 90 per cent of exports and some 75 per cent of state income — as a reason for not privatising.

All except Kuwait and Saudi Arabia allow foreign firms a minority stake in upstream oil development.

"The improved efficiency motive is not as strong here as elsewhere," said Abdul Moniem Al-Kindi, field manager at the Abu Dhabi company for onshore oil operations.

"The contribution of the non-energy sector is small and we cannot afford a mistake as the oil sector is essential," he said.

"In my view a cautious privatisation approach is justified."

Shaikh said Gulf privatisation was a policy issue. "Once the decision has been taken to proceed, privatisation will be easy here because there is ample domestic capital and international investors do not regard the region as overly risky," he said.

But bankers said that without more developed, deeper financial markets in the region, privatisation would be difficult.

"The regulatory framework still needs a lot of work and it needs this very fast," said Shebab Gargash, investment banking manager at Dubai's Emirates Bank International.

"The most visible absence of regulation is the lack of a formal stock market in the UAE and Saudi," he said, adding that the absence of a corporate bond market was another hurdle.

Delegates said state sell-offs were unlikely to prompt a sudden return of private Gulf capital invested abroad, estimated to run into the hundreds of billions of dollars.

"Before funds flow back, Gulf capital markets need to be developed and opened to foreigners, the regulatory framework must be improved and there must be more transparency," one said.

UAE aims to open bourse next year

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) said Monday it expects to open a long-awaited bourse in 1998 now that it has bridged the gap in the corporate laws and more companies have joined the market.

A draft law setting up the exchange will be presented to the Federal National Council, the appointed parliament, next month before it is put forward to the federal cabinet for approval.

"I think the debate on the draft law will take a few months. The cabinet will then approve it quickly," Economy and Commerce Minister Fahim Al-Qassbi told reporters at an investment conference in Abu Dhabi.

"There are instructions from higher authorities to expedite the implementation of the project given its importance to the domestic economy. I believe the project will finally materialise in 1998."

Sheikh Fahim did not say where the bourse would be based, but central bank officials have spoken of plans to set up the exchange in Abu Dhabi with trading halls linked to it in Dubai and, possibly, Sharjah.

A formal UAE stock market has been in the cards for more than a decade, but the plan was held up by the disparity in

corporate laws in the seven Gulf emirates making up the 26-year-old country.

Experts said an official floor in the oil-rich UAE has become imperative because more companies have joined the market, giving rise to manipulation and other malpractices.

"What also makes this project important is that several new ventures are being created, and they need to float their shares."

"There is also a trend for privatisations in the country and the process will not be smooth without a floor," said Zuhair Kaswani, a prominent UAE stockbroker.

Sharedealing in the UAE is currently conducted by telephone through a handful of authorised brokers who often complain about insider trading and low turnover.

The UAE has one of the lowest stock turnovers in the Gulf region because of the absence of an exchange but its capitalisation is among the highest.

Dealers estimated around 40 national banks and companies trade their shares in the market, with their capitalisation exceeding 70 billion dirhams (\$19 billion) at the end of the first half of 1997.

Sheikh Fahim hinted the UAE would end a ban on share-trading by the dominant foreign community when the stock market is launched.

The minister pointed out that expatriates had already been allowed to subscribe to investment funds set up by national banks in a bid to ease a steady capital outflow.

"The expatriates now have access to investment funds. Let us say we are moving step by step to tap their resources," he said.

The minister said a formal stock exchange would support the UAE economy as it will attract more investors who have been scared off by the absence of a floor as well as manipulations, mostly by major investors.

"A stock market is needed to regulate share-dealing and boost domestic savings. It is also necessary as other Gulf countries have official exchanges and there are plans to link our markets," he said.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE — plan to link their stock exchanges as part of their 1983 economic pact which calls for a common GCC market.

The first four members have floors while share-dealing in Saudi Arabia, by far the biggest and wealthiest GCC nation, is conducted through the most sophisticated bank network in the Middle East.

REUTERS The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates					Prices as at 27/10/97 19:02				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	AUD	NZD
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7614	0.6042	1.4538	121.59	1.3975	1.7200	1.9854	5.9016
DE Mark	0.5677	1.0000	0.3427	0.8253	69.03	0.7932	0.7877	1.1273	3.3508
GB Sterling	1.6550	2.9140	1.0000	2.4083	201.18	2.3129	2.8476	3.2858	9.7671
CHF Franc	0.6879	1.2099	0.4148	1.0000	83.56	0.9600	1.0254	1.3640	4.0540
JP Yen	0.0082	1.4475	0.4063	1.1958	1.0000	1.1486	14.14	163.05	4.8497
CA Dollar	0.7196	1.2761	0.4399	1.0522	1.135	1.2458	1.3975	1.2735	3.7457
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0228	0.3507	0.8845	1417.43	0.8114	11.52	3.4267	10.0000
NL Guilder	0.5037	0.885	0.3040	0.7328	61.16	0.7038	0.6861	0.9713	2.9713
FR Franc	0.1664	0.2983	0.1023	0.24231	20.58	0.2367	0.3363	33.6300	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	AUD	NZD
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7614	0.6042	1.4538	121.59	1.3975	1.7200	1.9854	5.9016
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	2.5297	0.5325	1.4111	0.4294	5.1673	2.186.07	4.7848	14.1414
Saudi Riyal	0.2665	0.4738	0.1609	0.36793	32.4317	0.2665	0.4738	0.1609	0.36793
Bahraini Dinar	2.65	4.6728	1.60231	3.83631	322.789	2.65	4.6728	1.60231	3.83631
Egyptian	0.2952	0.5209	0.1877	0.41005	3.9028	0.2952	0.5209	0.1877	0.41005

Energy									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	AUD	NZD
Brent	19.78	35.20	12.48	28.98	271.35	35.20	12.48	28.98	848.48
WTI	18.35	32.98	11.48	26.98	258.35	18.35	11.48	26.98	798.35
Bonny	19.78	35.20	12.48	28.98	271.35	19.78	12.48	28.98	848.48
Dubai	18.35	32.98	11.48	26.98	258.35	18.35	11.48	26.98	798.35
U.S. Gas	201.00	361.00	121.00	281.00	2711.00	201.00	121.00	281.00	8411.00


Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	AUD	NZD
SA Riyal	0.2665	0.4696	0.16099	0.36793	32.4317	0.2665	0.4696	0.16099	0.36793
AE Dirham	0.2722	0.47879	0.16448	0.36612	33.1345	0.2722	0.47879	0.16448	0.36612
KW Dinar	3.2855	5.7971	1.98728	4.78469	400.32	3.2855	5.7971	1.98728	4.78469
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.6728	0.23631	0.53631	322.789	0.3770	0.6728	0.23631	0.53631
CY Pound	1.9248	3.3913	1.1628	2.7994	234.134	1.9248	3.3913	1.1628	2.7994

* JOD Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	AUD	NZD
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7614	0.6042	1.4538	121.59	1.3975	1.7200	1.9854	5.9016
GB Sterling	1.6588	1.1646	1.0000	2.4099	201.18	2.3129	2.8476	3.2858	9.7671
DE Mark	0.3999	0.4019	0.3427	1.0000	83.56	0.9600	1.0254	1.3640	4.0540
CHF Franc	0.4845	0.4869	0.4148	1.0000	83.56	0.9600	1.0254	1.3640	4.0540
JP Yen	0.1194	0.12	0.4063	1.1958	1.0000	1.1486	14.14	163.05	4.8497
FR Franc	0.5803	0.5832	0.3040	0.7328	61.16	0.7038	0.6861	0.9713	2.9713
NL Guilder	0.3349	0.3367	0.3040	0.7328	61.16	0.7038	0.6861	0.9713	2.9713
IT Lira	0.4095	0.4113	0.3507	0.8845	1417.43	0.8114	11.52	3.4267	10.0000

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	AUD	NZD
USD	5.53	5.68	5.75	5.80	6.12	5.53	5.68	5.75	6.12
DEM	7.00	7.25	7.34	7.38	7.71	7.00	7.25	7.34	7.71
GBP	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44
CHF	3.25	3.29	3.29	3.31	3.34	3.25	3.29	3.29	3.34
JPY	3.48	3.57	3.73	3.91	4.05	3.48	3.57	3.73	4.05
FRF	1.78	1.81	1.89	2.00	2.21	1.78	1.81	1.89	2.21
ITL	6.57	6.52	6.28	5.99	5.79	6.57	6.52	6.28	5.99

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.									
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Main Equity Indices											
Index	Value	Change	% Change	Index	Value	Change	% Change	Index	Value		
New York	7632.4	-83.01	-1.08	FTSE 100	4885.2	-45	-0.92	Nikkei 225	17038.36	-325.38	-1.87
DOW JONES	7632.4	-83.01	-1.08	FTSE 100	4885.2	-45	-0.92	Nikkei 225	17038.36	-325.38	-1.87
S&P 500	931.01	-10.63	-1.13	FTSE 100	4885.2	-45	-0.92	Nikkei 225	17038.36	-325.38	-1.87
FTSE 100	4885.2	-45	-0.92	Nikkei 225	17038.36	-325.38	-1.87	CAC 40	2768.83	-80.2	-2.81
Nikkei 225	17038.36	-325.38	-1.87	CAC 40	2768.83	-80.2	-2.81	DAX	3878.12	-171.75	-4.34
CAC 40	2768.83	-80.2	-2.81	DAX	3878.12	-171.75	-4.34				
DAX	3878.12	-171.75	-4.34								

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHUKHSAN											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 27/10/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
M	346,000	245,000	ARAB BANK	15.2	1.21	7	240	79200	330.00	330.00	-
	1,360	1,080	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	10	19750	36143	1.83	1.83	-
	5,800	4,100	CAIRO AMMAN BANK	10.3	0.00	1	10000	50000	5.00	5.00	-
	3,600	2,760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.3	0.00	4	1200	3590	2.95	3.00	+0.05
	2,150	1,600	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	10.1	6.20	4	4200	10709	2.51	2.52	+0.01
	5,200	4,600	THE HOUSING BK.	15.1	3.83	8	28599	144656	5.06	5.06	-
	4,180	2,440	JOR. KUWAIT BANK	12.1	0.00	15	4150	14217	3.29	3.42	+0.13
	1,050	740	JOR. CHIEF BANK	4.9	8.75	10	8250	6505	0.76	0.80	+0.04
	4,050	3,430	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	14.7	0.00	14	2100	9724	3.57	3.62	+0.05
	1,530	1,110	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	17	0.00	2	350	422	1.20	1.20	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 237.60	%CHG: +0.20	75	79429	355165				
	2,020	1,590	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.3	7.98	1	100	188	1.88	1.88	-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 115.58	%CHG: 0.00	1	100	188				
	2,050	1,550	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.1	5.32	8	4628	8661	1.87	1.88	+0.01
	4,030	1,920	LIBRID ELECTRICITY	20.7	3.30	3	450	1602	3.66	3.48	-0.18
	3,050	2,300	SHIPPING LINES	14.4	5.26	2	139	343	2.60	2.47	-0.13
	8,300	6,700	ALRAI	15.2	5.88	11	850	7114	8.30	8.50	+0.20
	3,900	2,890	ARAB INTL. INV. INDU.	9.8	0.00	14	6162	23190	3.73	3.74	+0.01
	1,140	900	ZAKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	4	1750	1628	0.93	0.93	-
	2,230	1,630	UNIFIED CO.	8.2	6.36	10	3628	6276	1.73	1.73	-
	950	640	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	6	6600	5031	0.75	0.78	+0.03
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 111.79	%CHG: -0.06	58	24207	53844				
	1,050	930	ATTAWAR	9	0.00	1	2000	2000	1.00	1.00	-
	4,450	3,030	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	21.6	3.43	19	4584	14656	3.20	3.21	+0.01
	7,050	5,550	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.2	3.28	1	150	915	6.10	6.10	-
	11,160	9,070	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.6	8.15	21	3825	41584	10.84	10.91	+0.07
	7,200	4,500	JORDAN TANNING	6.4	5.77	2	475	2470	4.95	5.20	+0.25
	3,040	2,300	ARAB PAPER CO.	14.7	4.71	12	4940	12400	4.25	4.25	-
	1,750	1,040	JOR. PIPES MANFCT.	13.1	7.55	5	4269	4396	1.04	1.05	+0.02
	8,900	5,000	ARAB CEM. OUTRGR.	19.9	4.62	1	2000	1000	6.50	6.50	-
	1,480	1,050	KAFKA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	13	2750	3682	1.32	1.35	+0.03
	2,220	1,580	ARAB ALUM. IND.	5	0.00	10	1000	1460	2.45	2.46	+0.01
	1,690	450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.2	0.00	13	6400	3072	0.48	0.48	-
	1,230	820	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	25.4	0.00	10	8000	838	0.86	0.83	-0.03
	1,330	740	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	3	740	974	0.90	0.90	-
	770	510	NATIONAL INDU.	9	0.00	3	5526	3149	0.58	0.57	-0.01
	1,200	510	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	1	100	54	0.54	0.54	-
	1,420	970	UNIV. CHEM. INDOS.	6.9	0.00	50	72	143	1.43	1.43	-
	4,610	3,430	ALALADIN CO.	22.7	2.96	2	326	1314	2.66	2.66	-
	890	530	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	9	0.00	8	9000	3830	0.63	0.64	+0.01
	1,220	1,300	NATL. CHLORINE	14.4	4.58	7	6200	14036	1.53	1.53	-
	1,810	1,070	JOR. SEA CABLE CO.	13	0.00	1	87	2956	0.77	0.78	+0.01
	1,330	1,080	INTL. TOBACCO	6.7	0.00	1	150	183	1.22	1.22	-
	1,810	710	JORDAN STEEL	34.4	6.58	12	12000	9120	0.76	0.76	-
	840	580	NIO-EAST COMPLEX	7.5	16.39	14	12500	7416	0.61	0.61	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 116.10	%CHG: +0.09	163	80110	134264				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 171.21	%CHG: +0.15	297	183846	543461				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 27/10/1997											
	.630	.300	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	6	7500	2325	0.33	0.31	-0.02
	1,010	.380	JOR. TRADE PAC.	10.4	0.00	5	3250	1268	0.39	0.39	-
	800	.660	ARAB PET. PROD.	9	0.00	23	11000	3956	0.77	0.78	+0.01
	.570	.360	ARAB PTH. INVEST.	9	0.00	4	22070	8828	0.40	0.40	-
	.960	.720	AL-SABAH INV. CO.	P	0.00	2	20000	16800	0.86	0.84	-0.02
	.950	.610	AL-SABAH INVT	69.1	0.00	2	10000	4700	1.71	1.72	+0.01
	.400	.200	AL-SABAH MATCH-YESCO	2	0.00	2	1600	723	0.23	0.23	-
	.690	.470	ARAB FOOD & FIBR.	9	0.00	8	7500	353	0.47	0.47	-
	1,400	.860	UNION TOBACCO 75%	9	0.00	2	5797	5971	1.28	1.28	-
	.550	.310	NATL. FARM. CO.	F	0.00	10	5945	66	0.64	0.64	-0.02
	.860	.670	INDUS. CERAMIC	17.0	0.00	3	344	223	0.67	0.65	-0.02
	.820	.590	NATL. POULTRY	E	0.00	4	2169	1344	0.62	0.62	-
	1,000	.680	NAT. ALUMINUM. 75%	93.2	0.00	19	9275	4196	0.68	0.67	-0.01
GRAND TOTAL					128	283098	112110				

Marlins take World Series in thriller

MIAMI (AFP) — One of the most dramatic finishes in World Series history left Florida's Edgar Renteria a joyous hero and Cleveland's Tony Fernandez tumbling from glory to despair.

Renteria singled home the winning run in the 11th inning on a play set up by a Fernandez error, giving the Marlins a 3-2 victory over Cleveland and a 4-3 triumph in Major League Baseball's best-of-seven finals.

"I feel so excited," Renteria said. "I was just trying to hit the ball."

The thriller was the second-longest winner-take-all showdown in World Series history, outdone only by a 12-inning 1924 finish, and it brought Florida manager Jim Leyland his first title after 34 years in the sport.

"This is probably the happiest moment of my life," Leyland said.

The Marlins, who began play in 1993, became the fastest expansion team to win a Series title. They had won 24 regular season games and their first two playoff starts in their final times at bat.

Fernandez, whose two-run single in the third inning had put the Indians ahead 2-0, misplayed a ground ball from Florida rookie Craig Counsell after being screened on the play by base runner Bobby Bonilla.

"I thought I had woo the game. Instead I lost it," a heartbroken Fernandez said.

Bonilla, who scored Florida's first run with a seventh-inning home run, let the ball pass in front of him, blocking the view of second baseman Fernandez until it was too late.

"I tried to shield it somewhat. I blocked him from the ball," said Bonilla, who was grimacing in pain from a sore hamstring as he rounded the bases.

Florida's Jim Eisenreich was intentionally walked to load the bases and the play worked when Jamaican Devon White hit a ground ball to Fernandez, who threw out Bonilla at home plate.

That set the stage for Renteria's third hit of the game, a single off losing pitcher Charles Nagy that rolled up the middle of the field, scoring Counsell from third and touching off a celebration.

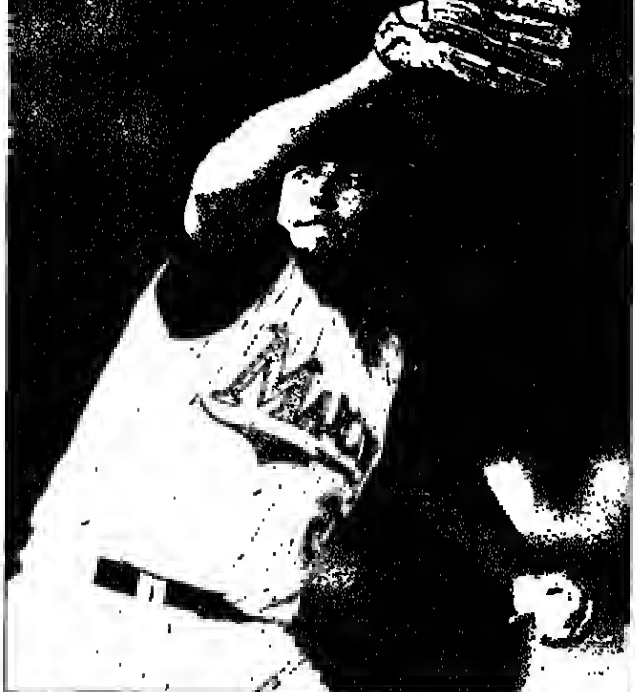
The Marlins brought this city its first major team



Sheffield (R) carry Marlin short stop Edgar Renteria after Renteria delivered the winning single in the bottom of the eleventh inning to defeat the Cleveland Indians 3-2 to win the World Series. Hernandez was named the series MVP (Reuters photo)

sports champion since American football's Miami Dolphins in 1974. Bonilla, a champion for the first time in 12 seasons, embraced Leyland before the manager took a victory lap around the field.

"I couldn't wait to hug him," Bonilla said. "I wanted to give him a big



Florida Marlins pitcher Al Leiter delivers a pitch in the first inning of game seven of the World Series against the Cleveland Indians (Reuters photo)

Livan Hernandez was named the Most Valuable Player of the World Series on the day he saw his mother for the first time since a 1995 defection from the Cuban national team.

"It's the happiest day of my life," Hernandez said. "I got to see my mother and give her a big hug and we won the World Series."

The communist Cuban government allowed Miriam Carreras to leave the country and visit the United States to watch her son, who had won two earlier Series games for the Marlins.

"I'm very happy to be here with my son and to see this last game. I want to give thanks to the Lord for making this possible," Carreras said.

Hernandez was only the second rookie Series MVP, the first being Larry Sherry of Los Angeles in 1959.

Two outs from defeat, the Marlins scored the tying run in the bottom of the ninth to force extra innings. Counsell slammed a sacrifice fly to score Moises Alou from third base and pull Florida equal at 2-2.

Alou opened the ninth with a single off Cleveland relief pitcher Jose Mesa and reached third on a one-out single by Charles Johnson before Counsell's fly out to deep right field allowed the Dominican to run home.

"You felt the momentum shift, sure, but we battled to keep it from happening," Cleveland manager Mike Hargrove said.

Renteria also made a great defensive play to prevent a Cleveland run in the ninth, throwing out Sandy Alomar at home plate. But it was his final hit that crushed the Indians.

"In the end, Renteria hit it where nobody was standing," Hargrove said. "Those are the breaks of the game. I told my team to be proud. They played a good Series and there is no reason to be ashamed or sad."

The loss spoiled Hargrove's 48th birthday and denied the Indians their first Series title since 1948. Cleveland also lost to Atlanta in the 1995 Series.

Barkley arrested for assault

ORLANDO (AFP) — Charles Barkley, a member of the past two U.S. Olympic gold medal "Dream Team" squads, was arrested here Sunday for hurling a man through a tavern's plate glass window.

Police reports said Barkley taunted his alleged victim by saying, "You got what you deserve. You don't respect me. I hope you're hurt. For all I care, you can lay there and die."

Barkley was charged with aggravated battery and resisting arrest. He faces a maximum of 15 years in prison for battery and one year in jail for resisting arrest.

He was hailed for \$6,000 by Houston Rockets teammate Clyde Drexler. The team was here for a National Basketball Association exhibition, during which Barkley was ejected.

Barkley, who has bloodied other men in barroom scuffles, said he was responding to racial insults.

"I'm always a target, but I'll never back down," Barkley said.

"I'm not going to settle. I'm not going to back down. The public does not have right to do things to you. It's plain and simple."

"If you bother me, I'm going to whip your a... The guy threw ice in my face, and I slammed his ass into the window. I'm not degrading that. I defended myself. He got what he deserved. What he did was inappropriate. I'm going to defend myself. Let there be no debate."

Marijuana use rampant in NBA — report

NEW YORK (AP) — Marijuana smoking and heavy drinking are rampant in the National Basketball Association, involving 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the players, the New York Times reported Sunday.

The estimate is based on statements made to the newspaper by players, former players, agents and basketball executives in more than two dozen interviews. One agent said the figure may actually be higher.

"No one can really know, but it wouldn't surprise me if it's 70 per cent," Dallas guard Robert Pack said.

"You don't follow guys home, but just from what you hear I think it's closer to 70 per cent," Orlando guard Derek Harper said.

Marijuana is not covered by the league's substance abuse policy, which has been in effect without major modifications since 1984.

Commissioner David Stern has said recently he would like to have a drug policy that includes marijuana.

"That substance can impair people and

cause them to be guilty of criminal conduct. We don't want that," Stern said in a recent interview. "I think it's incumbent upon us to make a statement about it."

The players' union has resisted a marijuana policy, saying all its members shouldn't come under increased scrutiny because of the transgressions of a few players.

Three players — Allen Iverson, Isaiah Rider and Marcus Camby — were involved in marijuana-related cases over the summer. Another player, Mookie Blaylock, was arrested in Canada last season when customs officers caught him with marijuana.

"Marijuana is not tested for, and yet that is the big thing guys are getting in trouble with in the league. It's terrible," Utah Jazz star Karl Malone told the Times.

"What you're saying to the young kids playing in college is this: smoke all the pot you want because it won't be detected until you are picked up by the cops and it's all over the newspapers."



Alfredo Duvergel of Cuba fights with Ermakhan Ibrahimov of Kazakhstan, during a final match of the 71kg category of 9th Amateur World Boxing Championship. Duvergel won the World Championship by points (Reuters photo)

Japanese fans angry after World Cup failure

TOKYO (AFP) — Fans hurled missiles and abuse at the Japanese team in the country's worst soccer violence after a 1-1 draw with United Arab Emirates further setback Japanese hopes of reaching the World Cup finals.

Cans, bottles, eggs and even a portable chair was thrown at the team and the coach that took them away from the Tokyo National Stadium on Sunday night after the Asian Group B match.

Fans skirmished with 200 police mobilised to protect players, with ace striker Kazuyoshi Miura bearing the brunt of angry abuse.

Angry fans shouted: "You are finished, we don't need you. It's all your fault, we would have won had you scored a goal."

Miura, usually a calm person, lost his cool and shouted back at the crowd.

"We didn't draw trying to draw. My attitude is the same as when I played the opening game of the final qualifying round on September 7," Miura protested to reporters.

The frustration of Miura and the other Japanese players spilled over in a dispute with the referee about the little amount of injury time in the second half.

Japan has never experienced soccer violence and though police said there were no injuries or arrests, the events were

a sign of growing anger at the national side's poor World Cup performances.

The draw guaranteed South Korea first place in the group and meant Japan and UAE will battle it out for second place and a chance to reach France '98 through a play-off between the second placed teams from Asia's two groups.

The result, which allowed South Korea to secure their fourth straight berth in the finals, left UAE in second place with eight points, one point ahead of Japan and two ahead of Kazakhstan.

Japan, who will co-host the 2002 World Cup finals with South Korea, desperately need to qualify for the finals to avoid being the first nation to host a finals without having ever been to one.

But their way to France is tough. They will play archrivals South Korea in Seoul on Sunday and then Kazakhstan a week later in Tokyo.

The Emirates play Uzbekistan on Sunday and then South Korea next, both at home. Kazakhstan also have a mathematical chance to finish second.

The top team from Asia's two groups qualify automatically. The two second placed sides battle for a third spot in a play-off. The loser of that match will get a second chance in a play-off against Oceania winners Australia.

Siemerink upsets Martin at Paris Indoor Open

PARIS (AFP) — Dutch player Jan Siemerink surged back after saving two match

points in the second-set tie-break to upset American Davis Cup player Todd

Martin 4-6, 7-6 (8/6), 6-2 and reach a second-round showdown against Britain's fourth-seeded

Greg Rusedski at the \$2.5 million Paris Indoor Open here on Monday.

The 6ft 6in (1.98m) Martin, out of action for over six months because of an injury to his right elbow, lost his way after squandering the match points and dropping his opening service game in the third set.

The 108th-ranked Siemerink had arrived in Paris having won just one match in his previous four tournaments, but put Martin under pressure from the start.

Martin, the world's No.5 player three years ago but

currently down in 52nd spot in the rankings, had been hoping to reach the second round and avenge his three-set loss to Rusedski in the quarter-finals in Vienna earlier this month.

The big-serving Rusedski, the U.S. Open finalist, a winner in Basel and a finalist in Vienna, is seen by many as a title favourite here — although he is drawn for a semi-final clash against world No.1 Pete Sampras.

In another of the first day matches, Sweden's Thomas Johansson beat fellow qualifier Sjeng Schalken of the Netherlands 6-4, 6-7 (2/7), 6-3. He now faces his 12th-seeded compatriot Jonas Bjorkman.

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	Kurt Russell ... in ESCAPE FROM L.A.	Alicia Silverston & Amy Heckerling ... in CLUELESS	Van Damme... in DOUBLE TEAM	CONCORD "1" Tommy Lee Jones & Susan Sarandon ...in CLIENT (12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30) CONCORD "2" Alec Baldwin & Kim Basinger ...in TOO HOT TO HANDLE	ABDOUN Nicholas Cage ... in CON AIR	ABDOUN Van Damme... in DOUBLE TEAM	Watch out for the new play THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE Starring Hisham Yanes and Amal Dabbas
	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 3:30, 5:45 only	Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	

Israel to propose Palestinian 'quasi-state' — Israeli press

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel intends to propose in upcoming final-status talks the creation of a Palestinian "quasi-state" with all the trappings of sovereignty but no powers on security and foreign policy, an Israeli newspaper said Monday.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has already come out in favour of the proposal and will present it in an upcoming cabinet meeting Wednesday, the daily Yediot Ahronot said.

Under the plan, Israel would allow the Palestinian National Authority (PNA)

to have all the external trappings of a state, including a flag, identity cards and a currency, the paper said.

But Israel would continue to have total control over defence, security and foreign policy for the "quasi-state," although it would cooperate with Jordan in all these issues, the paper said.

Mr. Netanyahu has said he wants to launch accelerated negotiations with the Palestinians over a final settlement between the two sides, saying they could potentially be completed within nine months.

The PNA wants to emerge from those negotiations

with an independent state in most of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and a capital in Arab east Jerusalem.

Mr. Netanyahu has insisted that in any final settlement Israel must keep "large and contiguous" security zones in the West Bank for its defence and maintain almost all its 140 Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Under a plan presented by Mr. Netanyahu last June, Israel would keep 50-60 per cent of the West Bank, including the Jordan Valley, areas around Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and water resources.

The PNA currently has full control over the 3 per cent of the West Bank, which includes the main cities, and 60 per cent of the Gaza Strip.

Israel has full control over 70 per cent of the West Bank, while the rest is under joint authority.

The PNA already has the trappings of power such as a flag and a passport, which is issued with case-by-case approval by Israel.

A recent agreement allows the self-rule authority to distribute identity cards to Palestinians approved by Israeli authorities.

'Who's a Jew' dispute endangers Netanyahu's right-wing government

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's fragile coalition government headed for a parliamentary crisis Monday after attempts to reach a truce in the "Who's a Jew" battle between progressive and Orthodox Jews collapsed.

Reform and Conservative Jewish leaders chose a collision course with Mr. Netanyahu by rejecting on Monday a compromise offer which would have imposed a time-out in the battle by progressive Jewish groups to break the Orthodox monopoly on conversions and other religious rites in Israel.

The progressive Jews insisted they would go ahead with a supreme court appeal due to be heard Wednesday challenging the Orthodox rabbinate's monopoly.

Orthodox religious parties which comprise a third of Netanyahu's coalition

responded by announcing that they would submit legislation in parliament this week to enshrine in law the de facto Orthodox monopoly over religious life.

The Orthodox bills could threaten Mr. Netanyahu's majority as some secular parties in his coalition which support attempts by Reform Jews to gain equal rights in Israel announced they would vote with the opposition on the issue.

Mr. Netanyahu issued a statement accusing the progressive movements, which represent the vast majority of U.S. Jews although they are minority in Israel, of rejecting the compromise offer as a political challenge to his government.

"The rejection of the compromise by the Reform Jews raises suspicion that they are interested in deepening the divisions within the Jewish people and in the state of Israel as a political tool against the govern-

ment," he said.

Reform spokesmen said they rejected the so-called compromise proposed by a government panel because it was simply a stalling tactic apparently designed to put the divisive issue on hold during a planned visit by Mr. Netanyahu next month to the U.S.

Mr. Netanyahu is scheduled to address a major congress of U.S. Jewish groups in Indiana on Nov. 16. Many of the Jewish groups have threatened to withhold donations to Israel and to Mr. Netanyahu's political party if he helps exclude Reform Jewish from religious life in Israel.

"We accept the principle of a compromise, but this has been dragging on for five months now and we are insisting that the Orthodox take a clear position," said Ehud Bendel, a Conservative Jewish leader.

The Reform and Conservative Jews also

complained that members of the Orthodox establishment called them "clowns" and refused to meet with them for fear of legitimising their beliefs.

"The Orthodox stand has become the official stand of the government in a manner which turns Reform and Conservative Jews into second-class Jews," said Rabbi Harvey Zimmerman, a Reform leader from Canada.

Earlier this month, the Orthodox already rejected a government-proposed compromise solution which suggested that Reform and Conservative rabbis be allowed to participate in conversions and other religious ceremonies while leaving control over the rites in the hands of the Orthodox chief rabbinate.

Orthodox rabbis said such a proposal would legitimise heretical views which threaten the very foundations of Judaism.

Israel could launch preemptive strike at Iran missiles — defence minister

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel reserves the right to launch preemptive strikes against long-range missiles in Iran or other countries if they pose a threat to the Jewish state, Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said Monday.

Mr. Mordechai was quoted by Israel Radio as telling an international conference on ballistic missile proliferation in the Middle East that Israel would not stand idly by if threatened by Iranian development of non-conventional weapons and long-range delivery systems.

"We must use all means at our disposal to prevent the use of long-range missiles and non-conventional weapons against us," he was quoted as telling the gathering of experts from Israel, the U.S., Europe and Jordan.

Mr. Mordechai said that in addition to pursuing development with the U.S. of advanced anti-missile systems, Israel's defence was based on "the ability to strike at all places which can serve as enemy launch sites and to

hit launchers, missiles and missile storerooms."

"If it depends on us and would be strategically possible from a political and security standpoint, we will seek to preempt and strike at those systems which threaten to harm us," he was quoted as saying.

Mr. Mordechai also made a veiled reference to Israel's reported nuclear capability to respond to eventual attacks with non-conventional weapons.

"Israel has a strategic capability to hurt those who would strike at us," he said.

"Should anyone strike at our essential or sensitive systems, they should expect that we shall seek to extract a heavy price in return," he said.

The Israeli defence minister did not specifically refer to Iran, but Israel Radio said the seminar focused much of its discussion on Tehran's reported efforts to develop long-range missiles and weapons of mass destruction.

Israel says Syria is also

developing new missiles capable of reaching most of Israel and carrying chemical weapons.

The Iranian threat took a high profile this week during a visit here by Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov of Russia, which Israel accuses of aiding the Iranian arms programme.

Mr. Primakov repeatedly denied during meetings with Israeli leaders Sunday and Monday that Moscow was playing any role in helping Iran gain such weapons.

But Israeli officials insisted they had hard evidence that allegedly private Russian firms were providing experts and technology to help Iran develop missiles capable of reaching Israel, the Gulf states and Europe.

Israel says Iran will have such long-range missiles within several months and could possess the ability to manufacture them without further Russian help within two to three years.

Turkey's Erbakan faces inquiry for 'Jihad' speech

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish prosecutors have launched an investigation against former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan over a speech he is alleged to have made in support of an Islamist television channel, Anatolian news agency said on Monday.

It said the Istanbul chief prosecutor's office had launched a preliminary inquiry over a videotaped speech in which Mr. Erbakan is alleged to have referred to the Channel 7 television station as the "Channel for Jihad (holy war or struggle)."

The tape showing Mr. Erbakan, leader of the Islam-based Welfare Party, was broadcast earlier this month by the secularist television Channel-D.

The prosecutor's office would decide whether to open a case after examining the videotape, Anatolian said. It did not give a date for the speech.

Mr. Erbakan said earlier that the tape had been altered.

"It's all montage, it's all montage," he said.

Mr. Erbakan resigned as prime minister in June following months of pressure from Turkey's secularist establishment over a perceived rise in Islamist activism.

The private Channel 7 broadcasts a mixture of documentary and discussion programmes on religious matters.

Some members of Welfare and the party itself are facing legal action since Mr. Erbakan fell from power.



ROLLS ROYCE FOR SALE: Steve Mowbray of John Barclay motors polishes the hood ornament of a Silver Spur II limousine Monday in a Mayfair showroom. Vickers Plc., the engineering group and owners of Rolls Royce Motors, have decided to sell the luxury car makers to concentrate on their core business of defence system manufacture (Reuters photo)

Mandela's return to Libya will not be accompanied by announcement

CAIRO (R) — South Africa said on Monday that President Nelson Mandela would make no announcements during a return trip to Libya this week and was not trying to mediate in a row over the 1988 airliner bombing over Lockerbie, in Scotland.

A statement from Mr. Mandela's office, relayed by South Africa's embassy in Cairo, sought to quell "media speculation based on reports which appear to emanate from Cairo."

It said Mr. Mandela would pay a "very brief visit" to Libya on Wednesday that would "touch on matters arising out of his recent visit

there." It did not disclose their subject.

"President Mandela will be making no announcements and is not intending to hold a press conference in connection with the visit...[and] is not seeking to mediate in the Lockerbie matter," the statement said.

It reiterated remarks by Mr. Mandela's spokesman Tony Trew, who said on Sunday that Mr. Mandela would visit Libya briefly on his way home from the Commonwealth summit in Scotland but had no plans for a major announcement on ending the deadlock over the Lockerbie bombing.

The Egyptian information

ministry has invited Cairo-based journalists to travel to Libya on Tuesday for a news conference. An Egyptian official said Mr. Mandela would make an important announcement related to a solution to the Lockerbie dispute.

It was not immediately clear why Egyptian authorities should be involved in the press arrangements.

Britain and the United States insist that Libya hand over two agents suspected of the airliner bombing, in which 270 people died. South Africa and Egypt are among nations that back Libya's offer to let them stand trial in a neutral country.

Kurd fighting in north Iraq hampers Turkey's 'Israeli-style security' plan

ANKARA (AFP) — Renewed fighting between two rival Iraqi Kurdish groups in northern Iraq is obstructing Turkey's plans to use one of those factions against separatist Turkish Kurds in a way similar to Israel's security mechanism in south Lebanon, Western sources here said Monday.

"As far as we understand, Turkey is planning to use the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) against its separatist Kurds while Israel is making use of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) in fighting the Hizbollah," a Western source told Agence France Presse.

"But ongoing clashes with the other large Iraqi Kurd group, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) weaken the KDP and its role in fighting the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) which has been fighting Ankara for a separate state in Turkey's southeast, the source said.

The KDP of Massoud Barzani has been openly allied with Ankara since a Turkish army incursion into northern Iraq in May to fight the PKK, in return for financial and military aid and a promise for the repopulation of hundreds of border villages.

These villages were evacuated in the 1970s during years of bloody fighting between Iraqi Kurds and the Baghdad government.

"When we repopulate the villages, effectively controlling the border area, security problems stemming from the PKK's terrorist activities will be greatly resolved," a KDP

official in Ankara told AFP. Turkey complains that the PKK has been using northern Iraq as a rear base in attacking Turkish targets inside its territory.

Turkey's PKK-related security concerns have forced the Turkish military to side with the KDP for the first time against the PUK of Jalal Talabani, although Ankara had remained neutral in previous conflicts between the Iraqi Kurds, the Western source said.

The PUK has been accusing Turkish war planes of pounding its positions in support of the KDP since Oct. 12 when the Iraqi Kurds resumed fighting after a fragile one-year ceasefire.

The PUK has apparently gained ground against the KDP in the battlefield.

Ankara officially denies siding with the KDP, saying its air raids target the PKK.

"Despite Turkey's earlier wish not to be involved in Iraqi Kurdish hostilities, the parties to the conflict have now become clearer: On the one side there are Turkey and the KDP and on the other there are the PUK and the PKK, although the PUK denies collaboration with the Turkish Kurds," the source said.

Thousands of Turkish troops, allied with the KDP, have also been fighting to wipe out PKK bases in northern Iraq since Sept. 23, in a second incursion this year. But the Turkish operation area lies north of the KDP-PUK conflict.

"The result is, the KDP has been weakened due to having to fight on two fronts, and Turkey is compelled to help its ally," the source said.

Last week Turkish officials publicly mentioned a vague plan to create a security zone in northern Iraq, but gave no details.

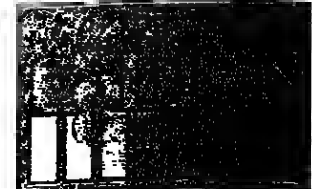
"The plan refers to an arrangement like the Israel's security mechanism in south Lebanon, not the setting up of an evacuated buffer zone where only Turkish troops would be deployed," the Western source said.

The SLA an Israeli-backed Lebanese militia group, helps Israel to control a "security zone" in south Lebanon which was created by the Israel in 1985 to protect its northern border from attacks by Lebanese and Palestinian fighters.

Analysts say the KDP and the PUK each have nearly 30,000 fighters while the PKK commands a force of around 8,000. But the PKK is apparently better equipped and trained than the KDP fighters.

Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani's groups have controlled most of northern Iraq since the 1991 Gulf war, but their partnership collapsed in 1994 due to rifts in power-sharing and revenue. More than 3,000 people have been killed in sporadic fighting since then.

The PUK, complaining that the KDP is the sole beneficiary from border trade with Turkey, wants the creation of a mechanism to share revenue.



Actress Turk no longer wants fame

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian actress accused of working in a high-priced prostitution ring said that she plans to give up working in film and television because of the case. "Now I hate cameras," Hannan Turk, one of Egypt's best known film stars, said in an interview with the magazine Rose Al Youssef published Sunday. She added: "My [screen] fame is the cause of all my problems. I don't want to be famous anymore." Turk is alleged to have been a member of a call-girl ring cracked by Egyptian police early this month. Turk, recently released on bail in the case, has denied belonging to any call-girl ring. She told the magazine she is the victim of a plot to drive her from films, but she provided no details. Egyptian authorities have imposed a news blackout on the case.

More light shed on Nixon's scheming

WASHINGTON (AFP) — White House tape recordings of Richard Nixon transcribed for the first time reveal a scheming president who favoured using smear tactics and multiple break-ins to crush his political foes. Excerpts of the recordings, printed in the Monday edition of Newsweek magazine, show that Nixon wanted to break into the National Archives to get documents he believed would sully the reputations of past Democratic presidents Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy. Newsweek says the president was convinced there were "damaging untold stories about the Bay of Pigs and about the Kennedy administration's brushes with nuclear war over Berlin in 1961 and during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962."

Adultery detector brings peace of mind to jealous Bulgarian spouses

SOFIA (AFP) — For years Roussi Mitev suspected his wife was cheating on him, but could never prove it. Then, Mitev discovered he had kindred souls. They organised, into a sort of suspicious spouses society. They issued a call for help on the Internet, and it was answered by a San Francisco private detective agency which offered to sell a used lie detector machine, replete with user's guide. Mitev bought it, and now offers his services for a fee. "The adultery detector can bring peace to a lot of families because in most cases the suspicions are unfounded," he told a newspaper in Plovdiv, where he lives.

Olympic gold medalist charged with battery and resisting arrest

ORLANDO (AFP) — Charles Barkley, a member of the past two U.S. Olympic gold medal "Dream Team" squads, was arrested here Sunday for hurling a man through a tavern's plate glass window. Police reports said Barkley taunted his alleged victim by saying, "You got what you deserve. You don't respect me. I hope you're hurt. For all I care, you can lay there and die." Barkley was charged with aggravated battery and resisting arrest. The victim, Jorge Lugo, 20, was treated for cuts to his right arm. His lawyer said Lugo did not speak English.